

THE
WORKS



WORKS

IN FIVE VOLUMES

OF

MOLIERE.

GILSON

A

NEW YORK

K. Poqueclin De Molière

THE

1677. 10. 37.

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OF

M O L I E R E

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THE
WORKS
OF
MOLIERE.

IN FIVE VOLUMES.

GLASGOW:

Printed by ROBERT URIE,

And sold by JOHN GILMOUR, Bookseller in the
Salt-mercat. M. DCC LI.

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Salisbury-street. MDCCLII.

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THE
MEMOIRS
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THE TENTH

VOLUME III

WORKS

George Douglas, of the Devon's Island, Scotland, and the County of Devon.

OF THE

BRITISH MUSEUM

MUSEUM



VOLUME THE FIRST

OF THE

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M DCC LII

[I]

M E M O I R S
O F T H E
L I F E
O F
M O L I E R E.

J O H N B A P T I S T P O C Q U E L I N, so celebrated under the name of Moliere, was born at Paris in 1620, and was both son and grandson to Valets de Chambres, upholsterers to the king. His mother was likewise the daughter of an upholsterer, whose name was Boudet. He lived fourteen years in his father's house, where he had no higher education given him than what was suitable to his condition; for his parents, intending him for their own business, had obtained the reversion of his father's place for him; but the fondness of his grandfather causing him often to take him to the Hotel de Bourgogne, the natural taste he had for dramatic representations was by this means soon awakened in him, whereupon he conceived a design very opposite to the views of his parents, and immediately asked leave to go and study at the college of Clermont, which they, with great unwillingness, consented to.

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He finished his studies there in the space of five years, in which time he contracted an intimate acquaintance with Chapelle, Bernier, and Cyrano. Chapelle, with whom Bernier was an associate in his studies, had the famous Gassendi for his tutor, who was very willing to admit Pocquelin to his lectures, as he likewise afterwards admitted Cyrano.

'Twas here that polite literature adorned the mind of young Pocquelin, whilst the precepts of philosophy taught him to reason; and it was from these lectures that he got those principles of justice which served as guides to him in most of his works.

The journey of Lewis the thirteenth to Narbone, in 1641, interrupted these engagements, which were so much the more agreeable to him as they were his own choice; for his father, who was grown infirm, not being able to attend the court, he was obliged to go there to discharge his office, which he afterwards exercised till his death; but at his return to Paris, his passion for the stage, which had induced him to study, revived more strong than ever. If it be true, as it is said, that he studied the law, and that he was admitted an advocate, he soon yielded to the influence of his stars, which had destined him to be the restorer of comedy in France.

The taste for theatrical representations was almost universal in France, after cardinal de Richelieu had granted a protection to dramatic poets. A great many particular societies made it a domestic diversion to act plays, in one of which, known by the name of the Illustrious Theatre, Pocquelin entered himself; and it was then he changed his own name for that of Moliere; thinking, perhaps, that he owed this regard to his parents, who could not but disapprove of the profession he

embraced ; or, perhaps, only did it to follow the example of the principal actors of the Hotel de Bourgogne, who had particular names in the theatre, both for serious and low comic parts.

We here lose sight of him for some years, this interval being the time of the civil wars, which caused disturbances in Paris, and the whole kingdom, from the year 1648 to 1652, and which it is very likely Moliere employed in composing some of his first pieces. La Bejart, an actress of Campagne, waiting, as well as he, a favourable time to exercise her talent, Moliere was particularly kind to her, and being soon attached to each other, by a similitude of sentiments, their interest became mutual, whereupon they formed a company together, and went for Lyons in the year 1653.

They there acted the Blunderer, a play of five acts, which drew almost all the spectators from the other company of comedians which was settled in that town, some of whom joined with Moliere, and followed him into Languedoc, where he offered his service to the prince of Conti. Armand de Bourbon received him very kindly, and appointed his company a salary. This prince had been acquainted with Moliere at the college, and had been diverted at Paris with the performances of the Illustrious Theatre, whom he had often caused to act in his palace. Not satisfied with intrusting Moliere with the conduct of his entertainments, it is supposed that he likewise offered to make him his secretary, but the good genius of the French stage decided otherways.

The Blunderer re-appeared at Beziers with new success, while the Amorous Quarrel, and the Romantic Ladies, had every one's vote. At the same time they gave applause to some farces, which, from their irregularity,

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scarce deserve the name of comedy ; such as the Amorous Doctor, the Three Riyal Doctors, and the School-Master, and of which we have only the titles remaining. It has been hitherto imagined, that in these kind of pieces each actor of Molier's company, following a general plan, furnished the dialogue themselves, after the manner of the Italians : but if we may judge of this by two pieces of the same kind which are come down to us in manuscript, they were written intire with the dialogues. The author very probably suppressed them afterwards, as thinking they would not acquire him that degree of reputation to which he aspired.

About the end of the year 1657, Moliere departed, with his company, for Grenoble, and continued there during the carnival of 1658, from whence he went to pass the summer at Rouen ; and in the frequent journies he took to Paris had access to the king's brother, who presented him to the king and to the queen-mother. On the 24th of October, in the same year, his company performed the tragedy of Nicomedes before the whole court, on a stage which was erected in the guard-room of the old Louvre. At the end of the play, Moliere having returned his thanks to the king, and artfully extolled the comedians of the Hotel de Bourgogne, who were present, he desired leave to exhibit one of the petty diversions he had performed in the country, which the king granted him ; and the Amorous Doctor was represented and applauded. The success of this attempt established the use of one act pieces, which had been laid aside at the Hotel de Bourgogne from the time of the death of the first farce-players.

The court relished the performance of these new actors so well, that the king permitted them to settle

at Paris under the title of The company of Monsieur, and to play alternately with the Italian comedians at the theatre of the Little Bourbon.

If we consider the number of works which Moliere composed in the space of about twenty years, in the midst of so many different employments which he was engaged in, we shall be rather apt to think, with Despreaux, That rhyme came to him, than give credit to what another author advances, That Moliere wrote very slowly; and we shall admire that vast and pregnant genius, which, cultivated and enriched by the continual study of nature, produced so many principal pieces.

The day he was to have acted The Hypochondriac, for the third time, he found himself more than usually disordered with the pain in his breast, to which he was subject, and which had a long time confined him to a strict regimen, and the frequent use of milk, and which had turned to a defluxion, or rather an habitual cough. This day he desired his company to begin acting exactly at four o'clock, and when his wife and Baron pressed him to take some rest, and not to play, "Alas! answered he, what shall all my people do! I should reproach myself if I neglected but one day to give them bread." The efforts he made to go through his part increased his oppression; and it was plainly perceived that he was seized with a convulsion in pronouncing the word Juro, in the interlude of the third act, which he in vain endeavoured to conceal from the spectators by a forced laugh; upon this they carried him home to his own house in the street of Richelieu, where his cough increased considerably, and was followed by a vomiting of blood which suffocated him. He died on Wednesday the 17th of February, 1673, in the 53d year of his

age, between the arms of two of the religious sisters who came as mendicants to Paris during the season of Lent, and lodged in his house.

The king being affected with the loss of so great a man, and being willing to give him, even after death, a new mark of his favour, prevailed with the archbishop of Paris not to deny his being interred in consecrated ground: the bishop, after being well informed of the religion and probity of Moliere, permitted him to be buried at St. Joseph's, which was a chapel of ease to the parish church of St. Eustace.

The mob, which were got together before the door of the deceased the day he was to be buried, made his widow think it necessary to throw some money amongst them; after which, the populace, who, perhaps, would otherwise have insulted his corps, attended it with respect, and it was peaceably conveyed to the grave on Tuesday the 21st of February, by the light of above a hundred flambeaux, which were carried by his friends.

He left but one daughter, and his widow was afterwards married to the comedian Detriche, known by the name of Guerin.

The wife of one of our best comedians has given us the following portrait of Moliere. " He was neither
 " very fat, nor very lean; of a figure rather large than
 " small; a noble mien, and a handsome leg; he walked
 " majestically, had a serious air, a large nose, wide
 " mouth, with thick lips; of a brown complexion, with
 " eye-brows black and large; and the different motions
 " he gave to them, rendered his countenance extremely
 " comic. With regard to his character, he was good-
 " tempered, affable, and generous. He was very fond
 " of making speeches; and when he read his pieces to

“the players, he desired them to bring their children
“along with them to hear him, in order to draw some
“conjectures from the natural movements they dis-
“covered.”

As an able painter is always attentive to remark, in the outwark expressions of the passions, the movements and attitudes which distinguish them, and then makes use of those observations in his art, so Moliere, in order to give us, on the stage, a true portrait of civil life, which the theatre is an image of, carefully studied the gesture, tone, and language of all the sentiments that man is susceptible of in all conditions of life. It was to this spirit of reflection, which was always ready to exert itself upon every thing that passed within it's view, to the extreme attention with which he examined men, and to the exquisite discernment by which he was capable of unfolding the principles of their actions, that this great man owed the perfect knowlege he had of the human heart.

If he has been reproached with sometimes having copied from himself, as in the scene of the two marquisses in the Man-Hater, which is partly imitated by that between Valere and Erastus, in the Amorous Quarrel; and if Clitander, in Love's the best Doctor, gives occasion to very nigh the same incident that Adrastus does in the Sicilian, we may at least observe, in comparing of these scenes, the extent of Moliere's genius and talents, which can be seen by nothing more evidently than by the comparison of similar ideas expressed by the same author in different terms. But we must not confound the two scenes in Love's the best Doctor, and the Sicilian, which we just now mentioned, with others which appear to have some similitude with them. Cli-

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tander and Adraftus, by means of their disguise, find opportunity of having a particular conversation with their mistresses, notwithstanding that Sganarel and Don Pedro were on the stage at the same time. In the Blunderer, the School for Husbands, and the Hypochondriac, the lovers, who had no other way of explaining themselves, declare their passion publicly to the fair they are in love with, even in presence of the very persons from whom it was their business to conceal their sentiments. These last scenes, which are more delicate and poignant, have still less resemblance to one another in the turn of them. Moliere arrived at the same goal, but by various ways more ingenious and comic one than the other. What a pregnancy, what a source of genius and wit must he be master of, so artfully to vary the same subjects, and to produce them over again in other points of light, under different but always agreeable colours!

The fruitfulness of Moliere's genius is still more evident in those subjects which he has taken from antient and modern authors, or in the passages he has borrowed from them; where he is always superior to those he follows, and, being equal to himself, gives a new life to every thing he copies, whilst the models disappear, and he himself becomes the original. It is thus that Plautus and Terence imitated the Greeks; but the two Latin poets being more alike in the choice of their characters, and in their manner of drawing them, have only represented one part of the general manners of Rome; whereas the French writer has not only exposed upon the stage the vices and follies which are common to all ages and all countries, but has likewise painted them in colours so peculiar to his own nation, that his comedies may be looked upon as a history of the manners, fashions, and

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taste of his age; an advantage which will for ever distinguish Moliere from all other comic writers.

As his works are not all of the same kind, in order to make a true judgment of them we must still keep to the same principles. In his first comedies, which were full of plot, he conformed to the custom then established on the French stage, thinking that he ought to give into the public taste, which was accustomed to incidents of a very unlike nature being united in the same subject; but this was rather the vice of the times than the fault of the writer. In those pieces which he composed in a hurry for the feasts, which were given by Lewis the fourteenth, he sometimes sacrificed part of his fame to magnificence, variety of shew, and the ornaments of music and dancing. Having nothing at heart, but readily to execute the king's orders, he thought of nothing farther than making zealous returns to the confidence which that prince placed in him, in intrusting him with the charge of diverting him. He did not even think that he debased his talent in sometimes giving into the taste of the vulgar, in those pieces where the gross characters always please the greater number, and where people of taste, without approving the nature of them, may yet remark passages which custom had consecrated, and which were, in a manner, become proverbial: besides too severe a criticism did not quite agree with the interest of a company which was not guided by fame alone, and who judged of the merit of a piece only by the number of it's representations, and the multitude of it's spectators. It is plain, that it was these kind of farces which he read to his servant maid, in order to judge from the impression they made on her, of the effect which their representation on the stage would produce;

for it is very unlikely that he consulted her upon the *Man-Hater*, or the *Learned Ladies*.

These two pieces, the very species of which was unknown to antiquity, were what the public received with the least eagerness, and yet were those from which he expected immortal fame, and which, together with the *School for Wives*, and *Tartuffe*, ascertained it to him. He has in those pieces made use of the highest art, concealed under plain and simple graces, accompanied with the most elegant and clear expressions, the most just and natural sentiments, and the most noble refined humour, to paint and lay open the secret foldings of the human heart; and it is by those Moliere has rendered the comic stage in France superior to that of the Greeks and Romans.

Nature, which was so favourable to him with regard to the talents of the mind, had refused him those outward gifts which are so necessary to the stage, especially for tragic parts. A hoarse voice, with harsh tones, and a volubility of tongue, which hurried him in speaking, made him, in this respect, much inferior to the actors of the *Hotel de Bourgogne*; but he did himself justice by keeping in a path where these defects were more supportable. He had difficulties to surmount even to succeed in that, and it was by continual pains that he got the better of that volubility, which is so contrary to just articulation, by endeavouring which he brought upon himself a hiccup that he kept till his death, and which he knew how to make use of on certain occasions. In order to vary his voice the more, he brought into use certain uncommon tones, which caused him at first to be accused of affectation, till people began to be accustomed to them. He did not only please in the parts

of Mascaril, Sganarel, Hali, etc. but he likewise excelled in several parts of high comedy, such as those of Arnolph, Orgon, and Harpagon; in which, by means of the truth of the sentiments, the familiarity of the expressions, and all the finesse of art, he deceived his spectators so well, that they did not distinguish the comedian from the person represented; he, therefore, always took upon himself the longest and most difficult parts.

The pains he was at to correct and perfect his own acting, extended even to his fellow comedians. The Impromptu of Versailles, the subject of which is the rehearsal of a comedy that was to be played before the king, is an image of what Moliere probably did at the common rehearsals of his pieces. Nothing that could render imitation more just, and more affecting, escaped his attention, which made him oblige his wife, who was richly dressed, to change her habit, because finery did not agree with the part of sick Almira; which she was to act in the Tartuffe: but he did not content himself with only instructing his actors, but likewise entered into all their affairs, both general and particular, was their master, their companion, their friend, and their protector. He was both attentive to compose parts for them, in which they could shine, and careful to bring into his company such only as would make it more famous: it was well known, that the report of the happy disposition of young Baron, when about eleven years old, made Moliere obtain an order from the king for him to leave Raifin's company and come to his, who, being brought up and instructed by Moliere, that was in the room of a father to him, became afterwards the Rousius of his age. La Beauval likewise quitted the country to come and shine on the stage of the palace-royal.

Moliere, who made himself merry on the stage at the expence of human foibles, could not guard against his own: being seduced by an inclination which he had neither wisdom enough to prevent, nor power to conquer, he looked upon the society of an agreeable wife as a necessary relaxation to his business, which, on the contrary, proved to him only a source of uneasiness: persons that attract the eyes of the public are more exposed than others to their ill-nature and ridicule; the marriage therefore which he contracted with the daughter of the comedian Bejart, was the occasion of his suffering at first the blackest calumny. The disagreement between the humour of an amorous philosopher, and the caprice of a gay coquetish wife, cast a cloud over his future days, and was the occasion of the same ridicule being thrown on himself, which he had so often played off in others: by this means he lost the repose and pleasure of his life, but without losing any thing of the agreeableness of his genius.

He was more happy in his friends, whom he used to assemble together at Auteuil, whenever his business permitted him to leave Paris, or he was not called to court. He was as much cherished and caressed by the grandees of his age, as he was esteemed by the men of genius and learning. The marshal duke of Vivone lived with him in a familiarity, which set merit upon an equal footing with birth; and the great Conde desired frequent visits from Moliere, and acknowledged that he always learned something new from his conversation.

These flattering distinctions neither hurt his genius nor his heart. Baron one day, at Auteuil, told him of a man whom extreme poverty prevented from appearing; his name is Mondorge, added he. "I know him,

" says Moliere, he was my companion at Languedoc, " he is an honest man ; what do you think I should " give him ? Four Pistoles," said Baron, after hesitating some time. " Very well, replied Moliere, I will " give him that for myself, do you give him those " twenty more." Upon this Mondorge appearing, Moliere embraced him, endeavoured to comfort him, and added to the present he had made him, a magnificent theatrical habit for tragic parts. It was by such examples as these, which are more affecting than bare discourses, that he endeavoured to form Baron's manners, whom he looked upon as a son.

We have not inserted, in these memoirs, the popular traditions, which are often uncertain, and always false, nor those facts foreign to the purpose, or very little interesting, which the author of the life of Moliere has heaped together : that which Charpentier, a famous composer of music, was witness to, and which he related to persons of credit, is but little known, and deserves to be made public. Moliere, returning from Auteuil with his musician, gave an alms to a poor man, who immediately after stopt the coach, saying, " I believe, Sir, you had no design of giving me a piece of " gold. See where virtue goes to build her nest," cried Moliere, and after a moment's reflection, " Hold, friend, " says he, there is another for you."

We cannot better finish these memoirs than with the following verses of Boileau.

Ere Moliere lay in charitable dust,
How few were to his muse and merit just !
Coxcombs and fools would scarce for sense allow,
Those strokes that are so much applauded now.

As soon as a new piece of his was play'd,
 New fools were anger'd, and new critics made.
 Ign'rance and error, like false marquess dress,
 Defam'd his wit, and his best plays deprest.
 Most fault was found, where most his genius shone,
 So wise, so just, was our indulgent town.
 This lord would have the scene be more exact,
 That knight is tir'd before the second act.
 Another vindicates the bigot's cause,
 And fain against the bard would arm the laws.
 The court he sacrifices to the pit,
 The marquis cries --- and damns his saucy wit:
 But when the sisters cut the fatal thread,
 And rank'd him with the number of the dead,
 Then straight his conduct and his wit were best,
 Then they securely stand the critic's test.
 Oh, no, they cry, Moliere in nothing err'd,
 With him enchanting comedy's interr'd;
 Slain by his death, she slumbers in his urn,
 Whilst we still hope in vain for her return.

7 MA 55

THE
BLUNDERER:
OR THE
COUNTER-PLOTS.
A
COMEDY.

A C T O R S.

PANDOLPH, Father to Lelius.
ANSELM, Father to Hippolyta.
TRUFALDIN, An old Man.
CELIA, Slave to Trufaldin.
HIPPOLYTA, Daughter to Anselm.
LELIUS, Son to Pandolph.
LEANDER, A young Gentleman of Rank.
ANDER, Supposed a Gypsy.
MASKARIL, Servant to Lelius.
ERGASTUS, Friend to Maskaril.
POST-MAN.
Two Companies in Masquerade.



SCENE, *in a public place at Messina.*

THE

BLUNDERER: OR THE COUNTER-PLOTS.

ACT I. SCENE I.

LELIUS.

MIGHTY well, Leander, extremely well, it must come to a dispute then, --- we shall see which of us two can carry off the prize; and which, in our common concern for this young miracle of beauty, can make the strongest opposition to his rival's addresses. Muster your forces, friend, and stand on your guard, convinced that on my side no pains shall be spared.

SCENE II.

LELIUS, MASCARIL.

ALELIUS.

Mascaril. What's the matter?

Lelius. Matter enough ----- in my amours every

thing falls out cross: Leander is smitten with Celia, and, by a most plaguy fatality, though I have changed my mistress, he still continues my rival.

Mascaril. Leander in love with Celia!

Lelius. He adores her, I tell thee.

Mascaril. So much the worse.

Lelius. Indeed! So much the worse, why that's what plagues me: however, I should be in the wrong to despair; having thee for a reserve, I ought to take courage; I know thy intriguing genius never found any thing difficult; thou shouldst be stiled the prince of valets: I challenge the world to -----

Mascaril. Good Sir, a truce with this wheedling; when we, poor pil-garlics, are wanted to serve a turn, then are we the dearest, most incomparable creatures: but another time, on the least disgust, we are scoundrels that should be cudgeled within an inch of our lives.

Lelius. Nay, faith, thou dost me wrong by that invective ---- But after all, to talk of the lovely captive ---- tell me, is there a heart so savage or insensible as to be proof against such charms? For my part, in her whole conversation, as well as mien, I see the strongest evidence of her being nobly descended: I am persuaded that heaven conceals her true pedigree under this mean appearance, and cares not yet to discover it.

Mascaril. You are extremely romantic, Sir, with your fine chimeras. But what part may be allotted to Pandolph in these same affairs? He is your father, at least he is pleased to call himself so. You know very well how easily his choler is moved, and how handsomely he can swear at you when your behaviour happens to be offensive to him. He has past his word to Anselm,

that you shall marry Hippolyta; judging, I suppose, that it is in matrimony alone he can find any thing to tame you: now, should he once come to discover that, rejecting his choice, you are a slave to an object he knows nothing of; and that the fatal power of this ridiculous love has taken you off from all regard to your duty; heaven knows what a storm will then burst about your ears; and what fine lectures you will be entertained with.

Lelius. Pshaw! pr'ythee a truce with thy rhetoric.

Mascaril. Rather a truce with your politics, they are none of the best---and you ought to endeavour---

Lelius. Do not you know, Sir, that no-body gets any good by crossing me? that I give but very scurvy wages for advice, and that a preaching lacquey consults his own interest but very ill by it?

Mascaril aside.] So, he's in a passion now. All I said was merely by way of joke, and to try your temper; have I any of the four features of a reformer about me? and is Mascaril, do you think, a foe to nature? You know the contrary, and that it is most certain the world can tax me with nothing but excess of humanity.--Laugh at the lectures of an old gray beard of a father; spur on, I tell you, and mind them not; O' my conscience, I am of opinion, that these crabbed dotards are made to distract us with their silly stories; and being virtuous through necessity, they enviously hope to deprive young people of all the pleasures of life. You know my talent, I am absolutely at your service.

Lelius. Ay! by this kind of talk thou art sure to charm me. To proceed, my passion, when I discovered it, was not disregarded by those fair eyes from whence it sprung; but, this instant, Leander has given me to

know, that he is preparing to deprive me of my Celia: Therefore let us dispatch, and ransack thy brain for the most speedy method to worst him; find me out any trick, fetch, cheat, or device, to disconcert the pretensions of my rival.

Mascaril. Stay, let me think a little of this matter. [Aside.] What can I contrive to help out at this pinch?

Lelius. Well, the stratagem?

Mascaril. Poh! what haste you are in! My brain must always march fair and soft---- I have nick'd your business; you must--- No, I am out;--- but if you would go---

Lelius. Whither?

Mascaril. That's but a shallow device neither. I thought of one that---

Lelius. What, pr'ythee?

Mascaril. That would not drive well--- But could you not?

Lelius. Could I not what?

Mascaril. No, you could not do it at all. Talk with Anselm---

Lelius. And what can I say to him?

Mascaril. Nay, very true, that's out of the frying-pan into the fire. Something must be done however. Go to Trufaldin.

Lelius. What to do?

Mascaril. I don't know.

Lelius. There's no bearing this, in short: you make me mad with these frivolous tales.

Mascaril. Why, Sir, were you but reasonably strong in ready cash, we had no need to stand dreaming here to find what way she should take; and we might, by purchasing this slave out of hand, effectually put a bar

to your rival's preventing, or insulting you. Trufaldin, who watches her very narrowly, is under some apprehensions of the gang of gypsies who left her here in pawn; and could he make his penny-worths of her, (which they have tired his patience in waiting for) to my certain knowledge, he would be glad at heart to sell her; for in short, he always lived like a true curmudgeon: he would submit to the strappado for a twelve penny-piece: gold is the god to which he pays supreme adoration; but the plague on't is ----

Lelius. What is it?

Mascaril. That your father is just such another covetous hunk, who will not allow you to dispose of his ducats, as you would do: that at present we have not one engine in reserve which can operate to the opening of the least purse for your assistance. But let us endeavour to come at the speech of Celia for a moment, to know her sentiments in this affair; this is her window.

Lelius. But Trufaldin stands close sentry upon her day and night; be cautious.

Mascaril. Keep you still in that corner. Thanks to our stars; here she comes most a propo.

SCENE III.

CELIA, LELIUS, MASCARIL.

LELIUS.

AH! madam, what obligations have I to heaven for offering to my sight those heavenly charms you are blest with! And whatever piercing pain those dear

eyes may have given me, I have inexpressible pleasure at the sight of them.

Celia. My heart, Sir, which, with good reason is astonished at this speech of yours, is not conscious that my eyes have injured any person: and if in any instance they have wronged you, I can assure you it was wholly without my leave.

Lelius. Oh! no, their glances are too charming to do me any injury. I count it my chief glory to cherish the wounds they give me; and ----

Mascaril. Why, you are mounting a note too high: this stile is by no means to our present purpose; let us spend our time better; let us know of her quickly what ----

Trufaldin within.] Celia!

Mascaril to Lelius.] Well?

Lelius. O cruel accident! what business has this plaguy old fellow to interrupt us?

Mascaril. Go, withdraw, I'll find something to say to him.

SCENE IV.

TRUFALDIN, CELIA, MASCARIL,
and LELIUS retired into a corner.

TRUFALDIN to Celia.

WHAT are you doing without there? and what mighty care urges you, you whom I have positively discharged from speaking to any mortal whatever?

Celia. I was formerly acquainted with this honest

young man, you have no need at all to be suspicious of him.

Mascaril. Is this the great Mr. Trufaldin?

Celia. Yes, the very same.

Mascaril. Sir, I am your most devoted servant, and it gives me extreme pleasure, that I have the honour, with all deference, to pay my compliments to a gentleman whose name the world rings with.

Trufaldin. Your most humble servant.

Mascaril. I may incommode you, perhaps. But this is a person I have seen elsewhere, who has convinced me of the great skill she has in fortune-telling; I had a desire to consult her a little about a certain affair.

Trufaldin. How! were you a dabler then in the black art?

Celia. No, Sir, my skill lies entirely in the white.

Mascaril. The case then is this. The master whom I serve languishes for a fair one, who has captivated him. He would very gladly disclose the flame, which preys upon him, to the beauteous object whom he adores: but a wakeful dragon that guards the treasure, in spite of all his attempts, has hitherto prevented him: and, what perplexes him still more, and completes his misery, is that he has just discovered a most formidable rival; so that I came to consult you, to know whether his amorous cares may have any ground to hope success, being well assured, that from your mouth I may infallibly learn the secret which so nearly concerns us.

Celia. Under what planet was thy master born?

Mascaril. Under a planet never to alter his love.

Celia. Without your naming the object he sighs for, the art I am mistress of gives me information sufficient. This young lady has a soul, and knows how to sup-

port a noble pride even in her poverty : she's not of a temper to be too lavish in declaring the secret sentiments that may have been raised in her heart : but I know them as well as herself, and am going with more composure of mind, in a few words to discover them all.

Mascaril. O prodigious power of magic virtue !

Celia. If your master piques himself upon his constancy in this point, and virtue alone be the spring of his design, let him be no longer under apprehensions that he shall sigh in vain : there's room enough to hope ; and the fort he wishes to gain is not averse to parly, and would be glad to surrender.

Mascaril. That's something considerable ; but this fort depends on a governor who may be hard to gain.

Celia. There lies all the misfortune.

Mascaril aside.] Deuce take the troublesome cur, how steadily he eyes us.

Celia. Now for your lesson in what manner you are to behave.

Lelius joining them.] Pray, Mr. Trufaldin, give yourself no farther uneasiness ; 'twas purely in obedience to my order that he has paid you this visit ; and I dispatch'd this trusty servant to you, with a tender of my service, and to treat with you concerning this damsel, whose liberty I am willing to purchase ere long, provided that we two can fix upon a price.

Mascaril aside.] Plague take the ass.

Trufaldin. Ho ! ho ! which of the two to believe ? --- This story very much contradicts the former.

Mascaril. Sir, this pretty gentleman's head is turned ; don't you know it ?

Trufaldin. I know what I know --- my mind misgave me that there was some plot a hatching here under
ground

ground --- Get you in [To Celia.] and let me not catch you at these liberties again.--- As for you two, who are a brace of downright bites, or I am much mistaken, put your pipes better in tune, the next time you would play upon me.

SCENE V.

LELIUS, MASCARIL.

MASCARIL.

EXCELLENT well! I wish, without a compliment, that he had drubed us both together for company. What business had you to shew yourself, and, like a blunderer as you are, come and give me the lye in all that I had been saying?

Lelius. I thought I did right.

Mascaril. Oh! 'twas most wisely judged: but hang it, this action ought not to surprize me; you are so fruitful in counterplots of this nature, that your wrong-headed freaks can astonish the world no longer.

Lelius. Good heaven! how am I rated for nothing! What, is the damage so great as to be irretrievable? In short, if thou canst not give me possession of Celia, at least take care all Leander's schemes be broken, that he may not be beforehand with me, in purchasing the fair one. But lest my presence should be further mischievous, I leave thee.

Mascaril alone.] You do well ----- To say the truth, now, money would be a staunch and powerful advocate in our cause; but this spring failing us, we must betake ourselves to some other.

SCENE VI.

ANSELM, MASCARIL.

ANSELM.

BODY o'me, 'tis a strange age, this of ours : I am perfectly ashamed on't ; never was there such love of wealth, and never so much difficulty to come by one's own. Debts now-a-days, be as careful as we can, are like children which are conceived with pleasure, but brought forth with pain. Money comes sweetly into the purse : but when our time comes that we are to be delivered of it, then it is the labouring pangs seize us. E'en let it be so, come 'tis no trifle this, of receiving a brace of hundred pieces that have been due any time these two long years ; nay, 'tis a great mercy.

Mascaril. *Aside.*] Od's my life ! what glorious game is there ! To shoot them flying now ! Hilt, I must try to get a little nearer, that I may tickle the trout a little. I have a lul-a-bee song by heart will send him to rest. [*Joining him.*] Anselm, I have just been visiting--

Anselm. Who, prithee ?

Mascaril. Your Nerina.

Anselm. What does the hard-hearted gipsy say about me ?

Mascaril. She's all on fire for you.

Anselm. She ?

Mascaril. And loves you so, it would pity one's very heart.

Anselm. How happy thou mak'st me !

Mascaril. The poor thing is even at death's door with love.----- Anselm, my precious, cries she at every turn,

when shall Hymen unite our hearts? When wilt thou deign to quench these flames?

Anselm. But why should she have concealed them from me all this while? These girls, in troth, are strange dissemblers! Mascaril, without flattery, what say'st thou? Though something in years, yet I have person sufficient still to please the eye.

Mascaril. Yes, truly, that face of yours is a good passable face still; if it is not of the handsomest, it is very agreeable.

Anselm. So that ---

Mascaril, [endeavouring to take the purse.] So that she dotes on you; and regards you no longer ---

Anselm. What? ---

Mascaril. But as a husband: and fully designs ---

Anselm. And fully designs? ---

Mascaril. And fully designs, come what will, to steal your purse.

Anselm. Ha!

Mascaril. (Sliding the purse to the ground.)

A buss from you, mouth to mouth.

Anselm. Hoh! I understand you. Come hither, the next time you see her, be sure to say all the fine things you can of me.

Mascaril. Let me alone.

Anselm. Adieu.

Mascaril. Heaven guide you.

Anselm, returning.] Hold! In truth I had like to have been guilty of a strange neglect; and you might justly have accused me of slighting you: I engage thee, here, to assist in carrying on my amour; I receive from thee a most agreeable piece of news, without the least present to reward thy diligence. Here, be sure you remember---

Mascaril. O, dear Sir, pray don't.

Anselm. Permit me.

Mascaril. I won't indeed: I do this without any regard to interest.

Anselm. I know thou dost: but however ---

Mascaril. I tell you I will not, Anselm; I am a man of honour, this offends me.

Anselm. Fare thee well then, Mascaril!

Mascaril, aside.] Tedious prattle!

Anselm, returning.] I have good mind thou shouldst treat this dear creature for me: I'll give thee something to buy her a ring, or any other toy thou shalt think proper.

Mascaril. No, no, pray have done with your money; without giving yourself any concern about it, I'll make the present; I have a modish ring left in my hands, which you may pay me for afterwards, if it fits her.

Anselm. So let it be then, give it her for me: but above all, manage matters so, as to cherish in her a most earnest desire to make me her own.

SCENE VII.

LELIUS, ANSELM, MASCARIL.

W LELIUS, taking up the purse.
HOSE purse is this?

Anselm. O bless me! I dropt it, and should have verily believed afterwards that some-body had rob'd me of it: I am highly obliged to you for this kind care, which has saved me infinite vexation, and restored me my money. I'll make haste home, and discharge me of my burden.

SCENE VIII.

LELIUS, MASCARIL.

MASCARIL.

IT is officiously, most officiously done, let me die.

Lelius. In troth, had not I come, the money had been lost for him.

Mascaril. Yes, to be sure, you do wonders, and have paid it off to-day with a most exquisite judgment, and supreme good fortune. We shall thrive amain, go on as you have begun.

Lelius. What's the matter then? what have I done?

Mascaril. In plain English, you have done like an ass: I can say it, and I ought to say it.---- He knows very well how low his father keeps him; that a formidable rival sticks close on our skirts; yet 'for all this, when I strike a bold stroke to oblige him, of which I take all the shame and hazard upon myself ----

Lelius. How! was this ----

Mascaril. Yes, ninny, it was to release the captive that I palmed the money, which your great care has balked us of.

Lelius. If that's the case, I am to blame. But who could have imagined it?

Mascaril. It really required a most refined imagination.

Lelius. You should have tip'd me the wink, to have given me notice of the affair.

Mascaril. Yes, indeed, I ought to have my eyes behind me: in the name of Jove, be quiet, and let's hear no more of these silly speeches: another person, after all this, would, perhaps, give up the cause: but I have

a master-stroke just now come in my head, which I design to put immediately to the proof, on this sole condition though, that if ---

Lelius. No, I promise thee, neither to meddle nor make, from this time forward, by word, or by deed.

Mascaril. Hence then; the very sight of you kindles my wrath.

Lelius. But prithee, of all things dispatch, for fear this business ---

Mascaril. Once more, I tell you, be gone: I'll set about it, out of hand. [*Exit Lelius.*] Bring but this project once to bear, if it takes, as I think it must; it will be a most exquisite piece of roguery. But let's to our experiment --- Good, here's my very man.

SCENE IX.

PANDOLPH, MASCARIL.

MASCARIL.

PANDOLPH.

Mascaril. Sir
Pandolph. To speak freely, I am much dissatisfied with my son.

Mascaril. With my master? You are not the only person who complains of him: his insupportable ill conduct in every thing, puts me every moment to the extremity of my patience.

Pandolph. I thought for all that, you had a very good understanding together.

Mascaril. I? Believe it not, Sir: I catch at all opportunities of throwing in a hint about his duty, then are we perpetually at daggers-drawing; this very mo-

ment we had a quarrel again about the match with Hypolita, in which I find he runs counter; and by a most palpable act of disobedience violates all the respect due to a father.

Pandolph. A quarrel?

Mascaril. Yes, a quarrel, and a desperate one too.

Pandolph. I was strangely deceived then: I took it for granted, that do what he would, he was sure of thee for a second.

Mascaril. Me? See what this world's come to! How is innocence always oppressed! Were you but duly apprized of my integrity, you would give me the additional pay of a tutor, whereas I am only hired as his servant. Yes, you yourself could not say more than I do, to bring him to order. In the name of goodness, Sir, say I to him very often, no longer fail with the first wind that blows; keep within bounds; observe the worthy father which heaven has blest you with; what reputation he has in the world; forbear to grieve his righteous soul, and live, as he does, like a man of honour.

Pandolph. That was talking to the purpose: and what could he answer thee?

Mascaril. Answer? Why only sham-stuff to perplex me. Not but at the bottom he has really the principles of honour, which he derived from you; but reason, at present, is not his master. Might I be allowed to advise with freedom, you should soon see him brought to your hand with little or no trouble.

Pandolph. Speak out.

Mascaril. It is a secret which is as much as my ears are worth, should it be discovered; but I can trust it, with full assurance, to your prudence.

Pandolph. You say well.

Mascaril. Know then that your schemes are sacrificed to the fond impressions a certain slave has made upon your son.

Pandolph. I had been told of it before ; but it concerns me more, as I have it from thy mouth.

Mascaril. You see how much of a confident I am ----

Pandolph. Truly I am overjoyed at it.

Mascaril. In the mean time do you really wish to recal him to his duty, without any bustle ? You must --- I am afraid still some-body should surprize us ; should he come to the knowlege of this conversation, it would be over with me ---- You must, as I was saying, to knock all this affair on the head at once, go underhand, and purchase this slave that's so much idolized, and send her beyond sea directly. Anselm is a great companion of Trufaldin's, let him go buy her for you this very morning. Afterwards, if you are minded to put her into my hands, I have acquaintance with some merchants, and dare answer to make the money of her she shall cost you, and so send her a packing in spite of your son. For, in short, if we would have him disposed for matrimony, we must first divert this growing passion ; and besides, admitting he were once resolved to wear the yoke you design for him, yet this other girl, having it in her power to revive his foolish fancy, might prejudice him against matrimony again.

Pandolph. Mighty well argued : this advice pleases me much. Here comes Anselm ; go thy way ; I'll do my best to get immediate possession of this plaguy captive, and put her into thy hands to finish the rest.

Mascaril alone.] Good : now to inform my master of this. Long live all knavery, and knaves also.

SCENE X.

HYPOLYTA, MASCARIL.

HIPPOLYTA.

AY, traitor, is this thy way of serving me? I overheard all, and saw thy juggling: had I not, could I possibly have believed it? Thou drivest a trade of cheating, and has sold me a most precious bargain. Thou hadst promised me, varlet, and I had all the reason in the world to expect it, that thou wouldst favour my passion for Leander, that thy address and diligence should find means to disengage me from Lelius, whom they would force me to marry, and save me from my father's project; and all this while thou art doing quite the contrary. But thou shalt find thyself much mistaken --- I know a sure method of breaking off the purchase thou art driving at so eagerly; and I'll go immediately ---

Mascaril. Hey, hey! how touchy you are! you take snuff in an instant; and without staying to inquire whether you have reason or not, you play the little fury with me. I'm in the wrong, and ought to make your words good, without striking another stroke, since you abuse me so outrageously.

Hippolyta. With what illusion dost thou propose to dazzle my eyes, traitor? Canst thou deny what I have just now heard?

Mascaril. Not at all: but you must know, that this whole contrivance is calculated directly to do you service: that this sly piece of advice which has no appearance of guile, brings both the old woodcocks into the

noose at once : that all the pains I have taken to come at Celia by their means, was for no purpose on earth but to give Lelius the possession of her ; and to order matters so, that Anselm, being work'd up into an excess of passion to see himself imposed upon, and balk'd of his imagined son-in-law, might turn his choice on the side of Leander.

Hippolyta. What ! hast thou formed all this mighty project, by which I have been so much ruffled, for me, Mascarille ?

Mascaril. Yes, for you. But since my good offices are so ill receiv'd, that I must bear to this unmerciful degree with your humours, and further, by way of reward for my services, you come here with a haughty air, and treat me as a pitiful fellow, a scoundrel, a common cheat, I'll presently take care to correct the mistake I have been guilty of, and break off my enterprize out of hand.

Hippolyta holding him.] Nay, pr'ythee be not so severe upon me, and forgive these sallies of a sudden passion.

Mascaril. No, no, let me go : I have it yet in my power to avert the stroke you are so terribly offended at. From this time forward you shall have no reason to complain of my meddling too much. Yes, you shall have my master, I promise you, you shall.

Hippolyta. For heaven's sake, good lad, be not in such a passion, I judg'd too hardly of thee, I was to blame, I confess I was ; [Pulls out her purse.] but I intend this shall make atonement for my fault. Canst thou find in thy heart to quit me in this manner ?

Mascaril. No, I cannot, strive whatever I will. But your hasty temper is very shocking. Consider with

yourself, there is nothing wounds a noble spirit so much, as to find the least imputation upon it's honour.

Hippolyta. It is true, I gave thee some very coarse language, but accept of this brace of guineas to heal thy wounds.

Mascaril. Fy! I had no such meaning; I am very tender in those points; but my passion begins to abate a little already: we must bear with something from our friends.

Hippolyta. Do you think you can bring my design to bear after all? And do you believe these bold projects will have that happy success in my amour which you seem to promise me?

Mascaril. Don't you sit upon thorns on that account: I have springs enough ready to set variety of engines at work, and though this stratagem should fall short of our wishes, what this can't do, another shall.

Hippolyta. Depend upon it, Hippolyta will, at least, not be ungrateful.

Mascaril. 'Tis not the hope of gain that entices me.

Hippolyta. Your master beckons you, and would speak with you; I leave thee. But remember to do all thou canst for me.

SCENE XI.

LELIUS, MASCARIL.

LELIUS.

WHAT the duce hast thou to do there? You promise wonders, but your slackness in performance is not to be parallel'd. Had not my good genius pre-

vented me, my affairs had ere this been turned upside down. Then farewell happiness, farewell joy; I had been given up to irretrievable sorrow; in short, had I not been in this very place, Anselm had got the captive, and I had been deprived of her. He was just carrying her off; but I parried the thrust, warded off the blow, and prevailed so far upon the fears of Trufaldin, as to make him keep the girl at home.

Mascaril. Thrice already! when we come to ten we'll score up. --- It was by my own contrivance, eternal shatterbrains! that Anselm undertook the desirable purchase. She was to have been left absolutely in my hands, when in-comes your cursed officiousness between us. And think you that I love you well enough to start a fresh project? I would sooner a thousand times be a mule, become a pitcher, a cabbage, a lantern, a moping screech-owl, or that monsieur Satan should twist your neck about.

Lelius alone.] I must have him to some tavern, and let him discharge his fury on the glasses.

ACT II. SCENE I.

LELIUS, MASCARIL.

MASCARIL.

I WAS forced to yield to your desires at last, in spite of all my protestations, I could hold it out no longer; and now am I embarked in fresh difficulties to support your interest, which I was fully resolved to have given up. So soft a fool am I. Had dame nature made me o't'other sex, I leave you to guess what would have happened. Nevertheless, don't you go upon this pre-

sumption, and give your back-stroke to the project I am about ; don't come blundering a-thwart me, and dash my expectations. Then as to Anselm, we shall make your excuse to him in such a manner as to gain every point we can wish. But should your indiscretion blaze out again hereafter, farewell, say I, all care of mine, for the darling object.

Lelius. No, I shall grow wiser, I tell thee ; fear not, you shall see ----

Mascaril. Remember it well. I have formed a hardy stratagem in your favour. Your father discovers an extreme laziness in not completing all your wishes by his death. I have just kill'd him (in words, I mean) I blaze it abroad that the good man, being surprized with an apoplexy, is departed this life. But first, to counterfeit this death the better, I have sent him packing to his country-seat : they have brought him news, by my contrivance too, that the labourers at work in his building, among the foundations which they are now a laying, have accidentally struck upon a hoard of money. Away flies he in an instant : and as his whole family, excepting us two, have attended him into the country, I kill him to-day, in every one's imagination, and proceed to bury him in effigy. In short, I have let you into the whole design I have laid for you ; play your part well ; and as to the character I am to sustain, if you catch me but a faltering in one syllable of it, tell me absolutely I am no other than a blunderbuss.

S C E N E II.

LELIUS alone.

TO say the truth on't, his wit has found out a strange method to bring my wishes to their full accomplishment; but when one is heartily enamoured with a beautiful object, what would we not do to be happy? If love is a handsom excuse enough for committing a crime, sure it may be sufficient for a harmless piece of imposture, which love to-day has forced me to comply with, by the soothing hope of the happy consequence that will accrue from it. Bless me! how expeditious they are! I see they are entered into discourse about it already; now to get my part ready.

S C E N E III.

MASCARIL, ANSELM.

TH E news may very reasonably surprize you.
Anselm. To die in this manner!

Mascaril. He was very much to blame, most certainly. I owe him a grudge for an affront of this kind.

Anselm. Not to have time only to be sick a little!

Mascaril. No, never was man in such a hurry to die.

Anselm. And how does Lelius behave?

Mascaril. He raves, and has lost all temper; he has beat himself black and blue in several places, and resolves to follow his papa into the grave. In short, to have done, the excess of his grief has determined me to bury

the deceased with the utmost speed, for fear this object, which feeds his melancholy, should tempt him to some fatal extremity.

Anselm. No matter, you ought to defer it till the evening: besides, that I have a strong desire to see him once more. He that buries a friend too hastily, very often murders him; for a man is frequently thought dead when he has only the appearance of being so.

Mascaril. I'll warrant ye him dead to all intents and purposes. But now, to return to what we were talking of, Lelius has resolved, (and a meritorious action it will be) to regale his father with a splendid funeral, and to cheer the deceased a little on his hard fate, by the pleasure of seeing these honours done to his Manes; he's left in great circumstances, but as he is a novice in his affairs, and cannot yet perceive but the gross of his estate lies in other parts, or what he has here consists in bills, he would beg of you to excuse the too great heat he shewed of late in consequence of the law-suit, and to lend him at least sufficient to defray this last duty ---

Anselm. I understand you, and will go see him.

Mascaril alone.] Hitherto, at least, every thing runs smooth as possible; now to secure that the rest shall answer: and, lest we should split in the very harbour, let us steer the vessel with all hands aloft, and a sharp look-out.

SCENE IV.

ANSELM, LELIUS, MASCARIL.

ANSELM.

LET us go out ; I cannot, but with the utmost anguish of heart, see him huddled up in this strange manner : poor soul ! so soon gone ! He was alive and well but this morning.

Mascaril. One may sometimes rid a great deal of ground in a little time.

Lelius weeping.] Oh !

Anselm. Nay, pray, dear Lelius ! In short, he was but a man ; even Rome can grant no dispensation from death.

Lelius. Oh !

Anselm. It dashes all human glory without the least warning, and has ever had a particular spite against it.

Lelius. Oh !

Anselm. This merciless devourer would not lose one gripe of his murderous teeth for the prayers of mankind ; all the world must feel them.

Lelius. Oh !

Mascaril. You might as well preach to the walls, Sir ; this sorrow is too deep rooted to be pluck'd up.

Anselm. If, notwithstanding all these arguments, you must still persist in your sorrow, my dear Lelius, endeavour at least to moderate it.

Lelius. Oh !

Mascaril. He won't do it : I know his humour.

Anselm. However, according to the message of your

servant, I bring you here as much money as will suffice to perform the funeral obsequies of a father ---

Lelius. Oh! Oh!

Mascaril. How has that word increased his grief! 'tis death to him but to think of this misfortune.

Anselm. I'm sensible you will find, by the good man's papers, that I stand debtor for a much greater sum; but had I, upon computation, not ow'd you a farthing, you should have had the free command of my purse; please to take it, I am intirely at your service, and shall make it appear that I am so.

Lelius going.] Oh!

Mascaril. What a deep concern is my master under!

Anselm. Mascaril, I think it proper he should give me a discharge under his hand, were it but in two words.

Mascaril. Oh!

Anselm. What turn things may take is uncertain.

Mascaril. Oh!

Anselm. Get him to sign me the note I require.

Mascaril. Alas! how should he comply with your desire in the condition he's in? Give him time to get rid of his grief; and, when his troubles abate a little, I'll take care immediately to get you your security. Adieu, I find my heart swell with grief, and I must go take my fill of weeping with him. Hi! hi!

Anselm alone.] This world is full of many crosses; every man feels them, more or less continually; and never here below---

SCENE V.

PANDOLPH, ANSELM.

ANSELM.

HEAVENS! how I tremble! 'tis Pandolph that walks! could he be really dead! How meager his face looks since his death! Mercy o' me! approach me not, I beseech you, I have too strong an abhorrence to elbow a ghost.

Pandolph. Whence can this whimsical fright come?

Anselm. Tell me, at a distance, what business brings you here? If you take so much pains to bid me farewell, it is too ceremonious, and in good earnest, I could have dispensed with the compliment. If your soul is in purgatory and wants masses, why you shall have them upon my word, and don't fright one at this rate. On the faith of a terrified man, I'll immediately set prayers a going for you, to your very heart's content.

Then vanish away,
And good heaven, I pray,
Of joys be the donor,
Unto your dead honour.

Pandolph laughing.] In spite of all my indignation, I can't help carrying on the jest.

Anselm. Strange! you're wond'rous merry for a dead man!

Pandolph. Why, is this all joke, pray tell me, or is it sheer madness that treats a living man as if he was dead?

Anselm. Alas! you must be dead, I myself just now saw you.

Pandolph. What? could I die without knowing any thing of the matter?

Anselm. As soon as Mascaril told me the news, it went to the very heart of me.

Pandolph. But, in sober sadness, are you dreaming? Are you broad awake yet? don't you know me?

Anselm. You are clothed with an aerial body, which counterfeits your true one, but which may take another shape in a moment. I dread seeing you swell up to the size of a giant, and all your features hideously distorted: for goodness sake, don't take any shocking figure; I have been scared sufficiently for this time.

Pandolph. At another time, Anselm, the simplicity which accompanies this credulity of yours, would have given me most excellent diversion: and I should have carried on the pleasant humour a little longer; but this story of my death, joined with that forged one of the treasure, which I was told upon the road there was nothing at all in, raises in my mind a just suspicion that Mascaril is a rogue, and a rogue of rogues, whom neither fear nor conscience can restrain, and who has strange hidden ways to bring his projects about.

Anselm. What, have they play'd upon me then? made a noodle of me? Troth, reason o'mine, you should be wond'rous pretty! Let me feel a little that I may be satisfied. 'Tis really the very man: a pox take me for an oaf as I am! As you love me, don't divulge this story, they'll work it up into a farce that will shame me for ever. But, Pandolph, give me your assistance to get my money back, which I lent them for your funeral.

Pandolph. The money, say you? Hoh! there the shoe pinches, there lies the hidden stress of the whole affair: to your cost be it. For my part, I shan't give myself much trouble about it; I'll go get the best information I can about this matter, as it affects Mascari, and if I catch him tardy, cost what it will, I'll make him swing for't.

[Anselm alone.] And I, for giving credit, like a sheer dupe as I am, to a scoundrel, must in one day then lose both my sense and my money. It finely becomes me, faith, to wear these gray hairs, and to run so readily into playing the fool: not to stay to examine a little upon the first report --- but I see ---

SCENE VI.

LELIUS, ANSELM.

LELIUS.

NOW, with this master-key I shall have access to Trufaldin, with all the ease imaginable.

Anselm. As far as I perceive, your grief has left you.

Lelius. What say ye? No, it can never leave a heart which desires for ever to cherish it.

Anselm. I came back immediately, to tell you frankly, that I had made a mistake with you a little while ago; that among the louis d'ors, though they look very good, I had, without minding it, put some which I look upon to be counterfeit; and I have brought money enough about me to change them. The intolerable impudence of our clippers and coiners is grown to such a height in this state, that one can't receive any money now which

is not suspicious. In truth, it would be doing well to have them all hang'd.

Lelius. You oblige me very much in being willing to take them again, but I saw none among them that were bad, as I thought.

Anselm. I shall know them very well : let's see them, let's see them : --- is here all ?

Lelius. Yes.

Anselm. So much the better. At last, my dear treasure, I grasp thee again ; once more into my pocket ; and as for you, my gallant sharper, you'll never touch one penny of them more. You kill people, I warrant you, while they are in full health ; and what would you ha' done then with me, a poor crazy father-in-law ? In troth, I was going to be rarely help up with a prop for my family, and had like to have pitched upon a most discreet son-in-law, in you, good Sir ! Go, go, die yourself for mere shame and vexation.

Lelius alone.] A palpable hit, I must own ; what a thunder-stroke is this ! How could he come at our stratagem so soon ?

SCENE VII.

LELIUS, MASCARIL.

MASCARIL.

WHAT ! were you gone out then ? I have been looking for you every where. Well, have we gain'd our point at last ? I'll give the cleanest bite of them all six trials to do the same. Come, give me the pelf, that I may go directly and buy the slave, your rival will be strangely astonish'd when this is done.

Lelius. Ah, my dear boy! the tables are much changed; would'st thou think what a cross trick fortune has played me?

Mascaril. What! what can it be?

Lelius. Anselm, being informed of the cheat, has just now got every farthing again that he had lent us, under a pretence of changing some pieces he suspected.

Mascaril. You do but joke, I suppose.

Lelius. 'Tis too true.

Mascaril. In good earnest?

Lelius. In good earnest; I am inconsolable for it; you'll be angry with me beyond measure.

Mascaril. I, Sir? More fool I then; anger is a torment, and I am resolved to make myself happy, come what will. Be Celia, after all, captive or free; let Leander purchase her, or stay she where she is; for my part, I shall be just as much concerned on one side of the question, as o' t'other.

Lelius. Nay, don't be so indifferent to me, but be a little more indulgent to this trifle of imprudence. Setting aside this last misfortune, will you not confess I had done wonders; and that as to the sham-funeral, I imposed on the world with a grief so natural, that the most sharp-sighted would have thought it real.

Mascaril. You have, indeed, good reason to commend yourself.

Lelius. Oh! I am to blame, and I'm willing to own it, but if thou hadst ever any regard for me, redress this disaster, and continue thy assistance.

Mascaril. I kiss your hand; I have not leisure.

Lelius. Mascaril! my dear boy!

Mascaril. No.

Lelius. Do me this favour.

Mascaril. No : I won't stir a step.

Lelius. If you are inflexible, I'll kill myself.

Mascaril. Do so ; 'tis right you should.

Lelius. Can't I possibly work upon thee ?

Mascaril. No.

Lelius. Dost thou see my sword ready drawn ?

Mascaril. Yes.

Lelius. I'll plunge it to the hilts.

Mascaril. Do just what you please.

Lelius. Would it not grieve thee to take away my life ?

Mascaril. No.

Lelius. Adieu, Mascaril.

Mascaril. B'y', master Lelius.

Lelius. What ? ---

Mascaril. Dispatch yourself then quick : pshaw !
here's tedious haranguing indeed !

Lelius. You'd have me play the fool, faith, and kill
myself, that you might come in for my clothes.

Mascaril. Did not I know, in short, this was all but
grimace ; and however our sparks may swear they'll do
the business, they are not so forward now-a-days to kill
themselves in good earnest.

SCENE VIII.

TRUFALDIN, LEANDER, LELIUS,
MASCARIL.

[Trufaldin taking Leander aside, and whispering to him.]

LELIUS.

WHAT do I see ? my rival and Trufaldin together !
He's purchasing Celia. Oh ! I tremble for fear !

Mascaril. There's no doubt, but he'll do all he can; and if he has money he may do all he will; for my part I'm in raptures at it. This is the fruit of your hair-brain'd blunders, and your impatience.

Lelius. What must I do? Say, advise me.

Mascaril. I don't know.

Lelius. Stay, I'll go pick a quarrel with him.

Mascaril. And what good will come of that?

Lelius. What would'st thou have me to do, to ward off this blow?

Mascaril. Go, go, I forgive you; I cast an eye of pity on you once more, leave me to watch them, I am apt to think, I shall fish out his secret by fairer means.

[Exit Lelius.

Trufaldin to Leander.] When the messengers come by and by, the thing is absolutely done. [Exit Trufaldin.

Mascaril aside, and going out.] I must trap him, and get to be trusted with his designs, that I may baffle them the easier.

Leander alone.] Thanks to heaven, my happiness is now beyond the reach of chance: I have found the way to insure it, and have no more to fear: whatever a rival may undertake hereafter, it will be no more in his power to hurt me.

SCENE IX.

LEANDER, MASCARIL.

MASCARIL speaking this speech within, and then coming on the stage.

O H! oh! help! murder! My brains are beat out! help! murder! oh! oh! oh! oh! traitor! barbarian!

Leander.

Leander. Whence comes that noise? What's the matter? what have they done to you?

Mascaril. He has laid me on, two hundred blows with a cudgel.

Leander. Who?

Mascaril. Lelius.

Leander. And for what reason?

Mascaril. For a mere trifle has he turned me away, and maul'd me in a most merciless manner.

Leander. Fy! he is really much to blame.

Mascaril. But either I am a mere thing of clouts, or I swear bloodily, I'll be revenged: yes, Mr. Thresher, with a vengeance to you, I shall give you to know peoples bones are not to be broke for nothing: though I'm but a valet, I am a man of honour; and after having employed me four years as a servant, you should not ha' paid me off with the twags of a sapling; nor have affronted me in so sensible a part as that of the shoulder: I tell you once more, I shall find a way to revenge myself. A certain slave hits your palate, does she indeed? And I must be pitch'd on to get her for you, must I? Yes, and I will order matters so, deuce take me if I don't, that some-body else shall carry her.

Leander. Hear me, Mascaril, and lay aside your passion: I always lik'd thee, and always wish'd from my heart, that a young fellow of spirit, and trusty as thou art, could once take a thorough fancy to my service: in short, if thou think'st the thing worth thy acceptance, if thou hast a mind to serve me, from this moment I retain thee.

Mascaril. With all my heart, Sir, and so much the rather, because propitious fortune offers me a handsome revenge in serving you; and that in the very pains I

take to please you, I shall find a punishment for the brute I have left: in a word, by my dexterity Celia and you ---

Leander. My passion has already done that office for itself; fir'd with that object, fair without a blemish, I have just made the purchase; for a price, too, much below the market.

Mascaril. How! is Celia yours then?

Leander. You should see her appear, were I but absolute master of my actions: but, alas! it is my father who is so: since he is resolved, as I understand by a letter brought me, to fix my marriage with Hyppolyta, I am cautious lest this transaction, coming to his ears, should exasperate him: therefore, in my bargain with Trufaldin (for I am just come from his house) I acted intirely in the name of another: the bargain struck, my ring was pitched on as the token, on sight of which he was immediately to deliver Celia. I am studying first ways and means to conceal her from the eyes of others, who so much charms my own; to find, with all expedition, some commodious place where secretly to lodge this charming captive.

Mascaril. A little way out of town, lives an old relation of mine, whose house I can take the freedom to offer you; there you may place her very secure, without a possibility of any body's knowing a syllable of the matter.

Leander. Faith, so I can: thou hast pleased me to my wish. Here, take this, and go get possession of this fair one for my use: as soon as Trufaldin sets eyes on my ring the girl will be delivered into thy hands: carry her me to that house, when --- But hilt! Hyppolyta is here at our heels.

SCENE X.

HIPPOLYTA, LEANDER, MASCARIL.

HIPPOLYTA.

LEANDER, I have some news, I ought to tell you;
but would it be agreeable, or disagreeable to you?

Leander. To judge of that and make answer off-hand,
one should know it.

Hippolyta. Give me your hand then; in our walk
towards to church I may tell it you.

Leander to Mascaril.] Go, make haste, and serve me
in that business without farther delay. [Exit.

SCENE XI:

MASCARIL alone.

YES, I will serve you up a dish, dress'd after my own
fashion: was there ever in the world so lucky a fel-
low? What a sudden ecstasy will this give my master!
His mistress to fall into our hands in this manner! to
derive his whole happiness from whence one would have
expected his ruin! to become thus happy too by the
hands of a rival! After this great exploit, it is our
pleasure that due preparations be made to paint us as a
hero, crowned with laurel, and that under the portrait
be inscribed in letters of gold, "Vivat Mascarillus kna-
vorum imperator."

SCENE XII.

TRUFALDIN, MASCARIL.

S OHO there!

MASCARIL.

Trufaldin. What do you want?

Mascaril. This ring, if you know it, will inform you what business brought me hither.

Trufaldin. Yes, I know that ring again perfectly well; stay there a moment, I'll go fetch you the slave.

SCENE XIII.

TRUFALDIN, POST-MAN, MASCARIL.

POST-MAN to Trufaldin.

DO me the favour, Sir, to direct me to the gentleman ---

Trufaldin. To what gentleman?

Post-man. I think, his name is Trufaldin.

Trufaldin. Your business with him, pray? I am he.

Post-man. Only to deliver this letter to him.

TRUFALDIN reads.

" Providence, whose goodness is solicitous for my
 " life, has just brought to my ears a most welcome re-
 " port, that my daughter, who was stole from me, at
 " four years of age, by some strolers, is a slave with
 " you, under the name of CELIA. If ever you knew

" what it was to be a father, and you find yourself
 " touched with the fondness of natural affection; pre-
 " serve, in your family, this child, so dear to me,
 " as if she were your own flesh and blood: I am set-
 " ting out myself, on my journey to bring her back
 " again; and shall, ere long, make you so handsome a
 " recompense for your trouble, that from your own good
 " fortune, which I am determined to advance, you shall
 " bless the day in which you were the occasion of mine.

Madrid.

Don Pedro de Gusman,

Marquiss of Montalcana.

Trufaldin. Though no great faith is due to people of
 their country, they who sold her to me, told me posi-
 tively, that I should soon see her fetch'd back by some-
 body; or other; and should have no reason to complain:
 yet was I now, through the impatience of my temper,
 going to destroy the fruits of a mighty expectation.

[To the Post-man.]

One moment later, and you'd trudg'd all this way in
 vain: I was going, this instant, to give her up into his
 hands; but enough --- I shall take all the care of her
 you can wish. [Exit Post-man,

[To Mascaril.]

And you, friend, you see what I have read, you'll
 tell him that sent you here, that I can't possibly keep
 my word; let him come and take his money again.

Mascaril. But the downright injustice you will do him.

Trufaldin. No more prattling, but about your business.

Mascaril alone.] Oh! the plaguy packet we have
 now received! Fortune has cleverly jilted me in the
 height of expectation; and in the nick of ill-luck comes

this Spanish courier; may thunder and hail go with him ——— Never certainly had so fine a beginning, in so short a time, such a sorrowful ending.

SCENE XIV.

LELIUS laughing, MASCARIL.

W MASCARIL.
HAT gay transport of joy inspires you now?

Lelius. Let me have my laugh out before I tell thee.

Mascaril. By all means, let us laugh heartily, we have abundant reason so to do.

Lelius. Oh! I shall now have no more of thy expostulations: thou'lt have nothing to hit me o' the teeth with; thou who art always dinning in my ears that I ruin all thy artifices, like a busy-body as I am: I have my own self play'd one of the cleanest pranks in the world; 'tis true, I am something of the hastiest, and now and then a little too fiery: but for all this, when I have a mind to it, I have really as quick an invention as any man alive; and even thou thyself shalt own that what I have done must proceed from a reach of invention that few are masters of.

Mascaril. Let us know then what this wond'rous invention of yours has done.

Lelius. By and by: my mind having been struck with a terrible panic upon seeing Trufaldin along with my rival, I was casting about with myself to find a remedy for that mischief; when, collecting my whole self within myself, I conceiv'd, digested, and executed a stratagem, at sight of which all thine, which thou makest

such a rout with, ought, beyond dispute, to strike their colours.

Mascaril. But what may this be?

Lelius. May it please you to have a little patience.— I feigned a letter then with great exactness, as writ from a mighty grandee to Trufaldin, setting forth, that whereas he had heard, by great good-luck, that a certain slave named Celia, in his possession, was a daughter of his, formerly kidnapp'd by a gang of thieves; it was his intention to come and redeem her; and he conjures him, at least, not to part with her; to take special care of her; that on this account he was setting out from Spain, and would make him amends for his care of her, by such noble presents, that he should never repent being the instrument of his happiness.

Mascaril. Mighty well.

Lelius. Hear me then: here's something much cleverer still: the letter I speak of was delivered to him; but can't thou imagine how? In such a nick of time, that the porter told me, had it not been for this droll trick, a fellow, who look'd confoundedly balk'd, had carried her off that moment.

Mascaril. And could you do all this without selling yourself to the devil?

Lelius. Yes; would'st thou have believed me capable of so subtil a piece of wit? At least commend my address, and the dexterity with which I have utterly disconcerted the well-laid scheme of my rival.

Mascaril. To be able to extol you according to your merit, I lack eloquence, and am unequal to the subject. Yes, sufficiently to display this sublime effort, this fine stratagem of war atchieved before our eyes, this grand, this rare effect of an invention, which, in force, yields

to no person's living, my tongue is too feeble, and would I had those of the most exquisitely learned, that I might sing in smoothest verse, at least, in learned prose --- That you will eternally continue, in spite of all can be said, the self same you have been all your days ; that is to say, a mind turn'd cross o' the grain, a distemper'd reason, and always upon the fret ; the reverse of good sense ; a left-handed judgment, a pragmatistical intermeddler, a loobily ass, a rash hair-brain'd puppy, what can I think of ? A ----- thousand times beyond what I can express. This is but your panegyric in abridgement.

Lelius. Pr'ythee, inform me, what puts thee into such a passion with me ? have I done any thing ? clear up this matter to me.

Mascaril. No, you've done nothing at all ; but don't come after me.

Lelius. I'll follow thee through the world, to find out this mystery.

Mascaril. Do so, come on then ; get your legs in order, I shall find you something will work them.

Lelius alone.] He has slipt me. Unspeakable misfortune ! What can I make out of this discourse of his ? And what ill office can I have possibly done myself ?

ACT III. SCENE I.

MASCARIL alone.

PEACE, my good-nature, and plead no more ; you are a fool, and I am determin'd not to do it : yes, my anger, I confess, you are in the right on't --- To be for ever a doing, what a meddling cox-

comb undoes, is too much patience, and I ought to give it up after he has defeated such glorious attempts --- But then let us argue the matter a little without heat ; if I follow the bent of my passion, though justly, the world will say I sink under difficulties, that I find myself at the extremity of my subtilty : and what will then become of that public esteem which extols thee every where as a most sublime sharper, and which thou hast acquired on so many occasions, as never having been found short of inventions ? Honour, Mascaril, is a glorious thing : make no pause in thy noble labours ; and whatever a master may have done to incense thee, complete the work, for thy own glory, not to oblige him ----- But how ! What canst thou do whilst the clearest streams are continually troubled by this adverse demon ? Thou seest that he obliges thee every moment to shift thy purposes ! and that 'tis beating the air but to pretend to stop that unbridled torrent which, in a moment, overturns the beautiful structures which thy art has raised. Well, yet one stroke more at least, out of stark love and kindness, let us sacrifice our pains, and hazard the success ; and if he still persists to baffle our good fortune, agreed, let us withdraw all our succours. In the mean time our affairs would take no ill turn, if by this we could defeat our rival, and that Leander at last, tir'd with the chace, would leave us one whole day for what I have in my thoughts. Yes, I have a most ingenious device working in my head, from which I could promise myself glorious success, could I get rid of this obstacle which stands in my way. Well, let's see whether this passion of his keeps it's ground still.

SCENE II.

LEANDER, MASCARIL.

MASCARIL.

SIR, I've lost my labour, your chap flies off from his bargain.

Leander. He has himself given me an account of the whole affair, but there is a good deal more in it; I have discovered that all this pretty mystery of being carried off by gypsies, of a grandee for her father, who is just a setting out for this place from Spain, is nothing but a sheer stratagem, a merry touch, a mere amusement, a tale with which Lelius designed to stave off our purchase of Celia.

Mascaril. Do but see the roguery!

Leander. And yet for all this, Trufaldin is so possessed with this idle story, and swallows the bait of this shallow device so greedily, that he will not bear to be undeceived.

Mascaril. For this reason he'll watch her very narrowly for the future, and I see no room here to pretend to do any thing farther.

Leander. If this girl appeared to me at first sight amiable, I now find her absolutely adorable; and I am in suspense whether I ought not to run the utmost lengths to make her my own: e'en to reverse her fortune, by plighting her my faith, and change her servile into matrimonial chains.

Mascaril. Could you find in your heart to marry her?

Leander. I don't know: but in short, if her condi-

tion is something obscure, her graceful manner, and her virtue, are winning charms, which have an incredible force to attract all hearts.

Mascaril. Her virtue, say you?

Leander. How! What's that you mutter? Go through with it, and explain yourself on that word virtue.

Mascaril. Sir, your countenance is chang'd all of a sudden, and I should do much better, perhaps, to hold my tongue.

Leander. No, no, speak out.

Mascaril. Well then, since you will have it, I am charitably disposed to help you to your eye-sight again. This same wench --

Leander. Proceed.

Mascaril. Is the farthest in the world from being hard-hearted; in a corner she'll grant you a favour without a struggle for it; and after all, take my word for it, her heart is not made of flint, to any man who knows how to take her in the mood: she looks as if sugar would not melt in her mouth, and would pass for a recluse; but what I speak of her is upon sure grounds; you know it is something in my way of business to be a connoisseur in this kind of game.

Leander. What, Celia ---

Mascaril. The very same; her modesty is nothing but downright grimace, but the shadow of virtue, which will never hold a siege, and which vanishes, as any-body may be convinced, before the rays emitted from a purse.

Leander. Heavens! what dost thou tell me? shall I believe a discourse of this kind?

Mascaril. Sir, you are at liberty, what is it to me? No, pray don't believe me, pursue your design, take the sly jade, and marry her; the whole town, in a body,

will return thanks for your public spirit ; you marry the public good in her.

Leander. Strange surprize !

Mascaril aside.] He has nibbled the hook. Courage, my brave lads, if he does but swallow it in good earnest, we shall draw a plaguy thorn out of our foot by this means.

Leander. Yes, this surprizing account has thunder-struck me.

Mascaril. How ! why could you ? ---

Leander. Go as far as the post-house, and see whether I have e'er a letter there, as I expect. [Alone, having mused a while.] Who would not have been deceived here ? Never did the air of a face, if what he says be true, more impose upon the world.

SCENE III.

LELIUS, LEANDER.

LELIUS.

WHAT may be the occasion of your looking so sad, Sir ?

Leander. Who, I ?

Lelius. Yes, you yourself.

Leander. Suppose I have no occasion at all.

Lelius. I see well enough what it is, Celia is the cause of it.

Leander. My mind runs upon no such trifles.

Lelius. For all that, you had formed some notable plots to compass her ; but you must say so, since they all miscarry'd.

Leander. Were I fool enough to be enamour'd of her, I should despise all your finesse.

Lelius. What finesse, pray?

Leander. Lack-a-day, Sir, we know all.

Lelius. All what?

Leander. Why, all your proceedings, from one end to t'other.

Lelius. This is all Hebrew to me, I can't comprehend one title of it.

Leander. Pretend, if you please, not to understand me, but take my word for once, be under no manner of apprehensions about a possession, which I should be sorry so much as to dispute with you. I am for a beauty that has not been blown upon; I shall ne'er whine for one that has been upon the town.

Lelius. Softly, softly, Leander.

Leander. Hoh! what, are you in earnest? Go, I tell you once more, and sneak after her without jealousy, you may call yourself a most lucky fellow. 'Tis true, her beauty is none of the commonest, but to make amends for that, the rest is common enough.

Lelius. Leander, no more of this provoking language; oppose me as vigorously as you will to gain her, but, of all things, forbear those killing strokes at her reputation; please to know I tax myself with too much cowardise, but to hear this blasphemy against the object I adore; and it will ever go much less against me to bear your rivalry, than the least word that touches her character.

Leander. What I advance here comes from very good hands.

Lelius. Whoever told it you, is a scoundrel, and a rascal; there's not a person living can cast the least

blemish upon this dear creature, I know her very heart.

Leander. But, in short, Mascaril is a very competent judge in such a cause as this, it was he past sentence upon her.

Lelius. He?

Leander. He himself.

Lelius. Does the insolent rascal pretend to scandalize a woman of honour, and think it possible too, I should make a laughing matter of it? A wager with you he eats his words.

Leander. Done, that he does not.

Lelius. 'Sdeath, I would cudgel him out of his life, should he dare to assert such lies to me.

Leander. And I would crop off his ears upon the spot, should he not stand to every syllable he has told me.

SCENE IV.

LELIUS, LEANDER, MASCARIL,

LELIUS.

O H! most lucky, there he is; come hither, ye curst cur.

Mascaril. What's the matter?

Lelius. Thou tongue of the serpent, teeming with imposture; dar'st thou fasten thy poisonous teeth on Celia? and slander the most consummate virtue that ever adorn'd a state of poverty

Mascaril whispering Lelius.] Not so furious, this story was a contrivance of mine on set purpose.

Lelius. No, no, none of your winking, and none of

your jokes ; I am blind and deaf to all that can be said or done : were it my own brother, he should pay dear for it ; and to dare asperse what I adore, is wounding me in the most tender part : all those signs are made to no purpose ; what was it you said to him ?

Mascaril. Lord, Sir, let's not pick a quarrel, or else I shall e'en walk off.

Lelius. You shan't stir a step.

Mascaril. Oh.

Lelius. Speak then, confess.

Mascaril whispering Lelius.] Let me go, I tell you 'tis an artful stratagem.

Lelius. Be quick ; what was't you said ? Decide this dispute betwixt us.

Mascaril. I said what I said, pray don't put yourself in a passion.

Lelius drawing his sword.] Ay ? I shall make you express yourself in another manner.

Leander stopping him.] Stay your hand a little, not quite so furious.

Mascaril aside.] Was there ever in the world a creature so dull of understanding ?

Lelius. Suffer me to discharge my just vengeance on him.

Leander. 'Tis assuming too much, to pretend to beat him in my presence.

Lelius. How ! have I no right then to correct my own servants ?

Leander. How, your servants ?

Mascaril aside.] What, not done yet ! he'll discover all.

Lelius. Suppose I had a mind to thresh him to death, what then ? he's my own servant.

Leander. At present he is mine.

Lelius. That's an admirable joke ! and how yours, pray ?

Leander. Beyond all dispute ---

Mascaril whispering.] Softly.

Lelius. Heh ! what wouldst thou be at ?

Mascaril aside.] Oh ! the confounded blockhead, to blow up my whole design ! and not to comprehend any thing neither, whatever signs one makes to him !

Lelius. You've strange whims, Leander, and want to impose them upon me. Is not he my servant ?

Leander. Han't you discharged him your service for some misdemeanour ?

Lelius. I don't know what this means.

Leander. And did you not in the violence of your fury lay him over the shoulders most unmercifully ?

Lelius. No such thing ; I discharge him and cudgel him at that rate ? You impose upon me, Leander, or he imposes upon you.

Mascaril aside.] On, on, blunderbuss, you'll do your own business effectually.

Leander to Mascaril.] Then all this drubbing is purely imaginary ?

Mascaril. He knows not what he says ; his memory ---

Leander. No, no, all these signs don't look well in thee ; I suspect some crafty piece of artifice here ; but for sake of the invention, go thy ways, I forgive thee. It's pretty sufficient for me, that he has undeceived me, so as to let me see for what reason thou hadst put this trick upon me ; and that I come off so cheap, when I had trusted myself to thy hypocritical care. This ought to be call'd, An advertisement to the reader. Adieu, Lelius, adieu, your most obedient servant.

SCENE V.

LELIUS, MASCARIL.

MASCARIL,

COURAGE, my brave boy, our prowess ever attends us ; let us draw, and bravely take the field ; let us act Olibrius, the murderer of the innocents.

Lelius. He had accus'd thee of base reflections against ---

Mascaril. And you could not let the artifice pass, leave him in his error, which made well for you, and which had pretty near wean'd him of his love ? No, truly, he has an open soul, a stranger to dissimulation. With much ado, I had worm'd myself dextrously into his rival's favour ; this trick had near given me possession of his mistress ; he balks me of her by false alarms ; I try to abate the warmth of his rival's passion, whip comes in my giddy-brains, and sets him agog again. In vain did I make signs to him, and show'd him it was all design : it signify nothing, he pushes his point home, and never rests satisfied till he had unravel'd the whole affair. Grand, and sublime effort of invention, which yields to no man's living ! 'Tis an exquisite piece, and worthy, in troth, to be made a present of to the king's cabinet !

Lelius. I'm not surprized that I baffle your expectations ; if I'm not acquainted with the designs you are setting on foot, I shall make a hundred such mistakes.

Mascaril. So much the worse.

Lelius. At least, if you would be justly angry with

me to some purpose, give me a little insight into your designs; but if I'm kept in the dark as to the spring of them, 'tis that's the reason why I am always caught napping.

Mascaril. Ay! there lies all the mischief, 'tis that which ruins us: in troth, my very worthy patron, I tell it you over and over, you will never be otherwise than an ass whilst there's breath in you.

Lelius. Since the thing is done, let's think of it no more: my rival, however, will not have it in his power to disturb me, and provided thy endeavours which I absolutely rely upon ---

Mascaril. Let us drop this discourse, and talk of something else: I'm not so easily pacified, not I; I am in too great a passion for that; you must, in the first place, do a good office for me, and we shall see afterwards whether I ought to undertake the management of your amours, or no.

Lelius. If that be all it sticks at, I refuse nothing: tell me, hast thou need of my blood, or my sword.

Mascaril. What strange whims run in his head! You are just o' th' humour of those friends of the blade, whom one always finds more ready to draw their sword than to produce a tester, when they should give it.

Lelius. What is it I can do for thee then?

Mascaril. Why, you must absolutely appease your father's anger.

Lelius. We have made a peace.

Mascaril. Yes, but not for me: I kill'd him this morning for your sake: the very fancy of it shocks him; and these sort of feints are cruel strokes to such old fellows as he, which occasion the melancholy reflection, much against their will, on the state their condition

borders upon. The good fire, old as he is, loves life hugely, and can relish no joke upon that subject: he dreads the omen, and being enrag'd at me, they tell me he has enter'd an action against me. I'm afraid, if I am lodg'd at the expence of the king, that I may like it so well, after one quarter of an hour's acquaintance, that I shall hardly prevail on myself to quit the place ever after. There are a good many writs out against me, of pretty long standing; for, in short, virtue is never without envy, and is always persecuted in this cursed age. Go then and prevail upon him.

Lelius. Yes, we shall bring him to temper; but you promise at the same time ---

Mascaril. O! ay, we shall see. [*Exit Lelius.*] Now for a little breath after so much fatigue; let us stop, for a while, the career of our intrigues, and not plague ourselves as if we were haunted; Leander is incapacitated, at least, to hurt us; and an embargo laid upon Celia by the contrivance of ---

SCENE VI.

ERGASTUS, MASCARIL.

ERGASTUS,

I WAS looking for you, high and low, to do you a piece of service, by giving you information about a secret which greatly concerns you.

Mascaril. What may that be?

Ergastus. Have we no list'ners about us?

Mascaril. None at all,

Ergastus. We are friends, as much as two people can

be: I am acquainted with all thy projects, and with thy master's passion: look sharp about you by and by: Leander has form'd a party to carry off Celia, and I am inform'd that he has made a proper disposition of every thing, and that he flatters himself he shall find admission into Trufaldin's house in masquerade, having understood that at this season the women of the neighbourhood very often pay visits, in the evening, masqu'd.

Mascaril. Yes, a word to the wife; he's not yet in full possession, I may happen by and by to spring the game before him; and as to this thrust, I know how to give him the *contretens*, by which I design he shall run himself upon my point: he's not aware of the singular gifts heaven has enrich'd me with: good by'e, we'll take a pint together at next meeting.

SCENE VII.

MASCARIL alone.

WE must, we must reap all the benefit to ourselves, from this amorous intrigue, that the thing will possibly admit of; and by a dextrous, uncommon turn, attempt the glory without the hazard. If I mask so as to get the start of him, Leander will certainly have no reason to triumph over us; and there, if we take the prize, before he comes up, he'll defray the charges of the expedition; because his project having already, in some measure, taken wind, the suspicion will always fall on his side: and we, being covered from the pursuit of the enemy, shall need give ourselves no concern as to the consequences of this dangerous attack: this it is to keep out of the scrap of ostentation, and

hook out the chefnuts with the cat's paw. Now then for a masque with some of my choice comrades ; to be beforehand with our gentry, we must have no loitering : I know where pufs is squat, and can easily furnish myself with men and tackle, in the turn of a hand. Depend upon't, I put my dexterity to it's proper use : if heaven has distributed to me my portion in knavery, I am none of your degenerate spirits who hide the talents they have received.

SCENE VIII.

LELIUS, ERGASTUS.

LELIUS.

HE intends to carry her off in masquerade ?

Ergastus. There is nothing more certain ; one of the company having inform'd me of this design, I ran instantly to Mascaril, and told him all the affair, who is gone, as he said, to disappoint this party by some extempore stratagem ; and as I have accidentally met you here, I thought it my duty to acquaint you with the whole.

Lelius. I am exceedingly obliged to you for this news ; go, I shan't forget this honest piece of service. [Exit Ergastus.] My droll rascal will certainly play them some trick or other : but I have a mind, on my part, to second his design : it shall never be said, that, in a business which so nearly concerns me, I should stir no more than a post ; 'tis about the time, they'll be surpriz'd at sight of me : pox ! why did I not bring my musquet with me ? But come, and oppose me who dare,

70 THE BLUNDERER.

I've a case of good pistols, and my sword is true —
So ho! within there; a word with you!

SCENE IX.

TRUFALDIN at his window, LELIUS.

WHAT is the matter? who is there?

Lelius. Fasten your doors carefully to-night.

Trufaldin. For what reason?

Lelius. There are certain sparks coming in masques, who design you an impertinent sort of serenade: they intend to carry off your Celia.

Trufaldin. Heavens!

Lelius. And they'll infallibly be here in a very short time: keep where you are, you may see the whole transaction from your window: hey! what did I say? don't you discern them already? hift --- you shall see me affront them; we shall have admirable sport, if our line don't break.

SCENE X.

LELIUS, TRUFALDIN, MASCARIL
and his company masqu'd.

TRUFALDIN.

OH! the pleasant rogues that think to surprise me!

Lelius. You that are masqued whither so fast? May

one be let into the secret? Trufaldin, pray open to these gentry that they may have a mumming bout: [To Mascaril, disguised as a woman.] Lord, how exquisitely handsome she is! how genteel her air! how now! what! do you grumble! but without offence, may one remove the masque, and see that phiz o' yours?

Trufaldin. Hence, ye knaves, ye villains, be gone, ye raggamuffins ----- And you, Sir, good night, and many thanks.

SCENE XI.

LELIUS, MASCARIL.

LELIUS seeing Mascaril unmasqu'd.

MASCARIL, is it thee?

Mascaril. No, marry is it not, 'tis some-body else.

Lelius. Alas! what a shock is this! how hard is my fortune! could I possibly guess this, having no notice of the private reasons which had disguised thee? wretch that I am, unwittingly to play thee this trick, by prying too curiously under the masque! Now, have I as good a mind, in the just heat of my passion, to drub myself, or give myself a thousand lashes!

Mascaril. Adieu, most refin'd wit, unparallel'd invention.

Lelius. Unfortunate! if thy passion bereaves me of thy succour, what guardian angel can I invoke?

Mascaril. Why, seignior Belzebub.

Lelius. Ah! if thy heart is not insensible as brass, or steel, once more, at least, let my rash folly find a

pardon; if to gain this boon 'tis necessary I should kiss thy feet; behold me ---

Masfcaril. Tol, lol, de rol: come, my boys, let's away. I hear some company who are just at our heels.

SCENE XII.

LEANDER, and his company masqu'd,

TRUFALDIN at his window.

LEANDER.

SOFTLY there, Let us do nothing but in the gentlest manner.

Trufaldin. How's this! what, masques besieging my doors all night! Gentlemen, pray don't take cold in your pleasures; heads that are turn'd this way, have leisure enough without doubt. 'Tis something of the latest to take Celia along with you; excuse her for this night, she intreats you would: the dear girl is a-bed, and can't speak to you; I'm heartily sorry for you: but to refresh you under the great pains you are at for her sake, she presents you with this box of perfume.

Leander. Phogh! what a stink is here! I'm all besmear'd: we are discover'd, let's draw off this way.

ACT

ACT IV. SCENE I.

LELIUS disguised like an Armenian, MASCARIL.

MASCARIL.

THERE you are bundled up after a most ridiculous fashion.

Lelius. Thou hast revived my dead hopes by this contrivance.

Mascaril. My passion's always too soon over; 'tis in vain to swear and make protestations, I can never stand to them.

Lelius. In return, depend upon it, if I ever have it in my power, I'll be grateful to thy heart's content, and though I had but one morsel of bread ---

Mascaril. Enough: bend all your thoughts to the new design we have on foot; however if we catch you in any blunder, you can't lay the miscarriage upon surprize any more; your part in this play ought to be had perfectly by heart.

Lelius. But how did Trufaldin receive thee at his house?

Mascaril. I noos'd the good fire with a pretended concern for him; I went with great earnestness to inform him, that unless he look'd well about him there were people who would surprize him; that they took their aim, and from more than one quarter too, at her, of whose birth a preparatory letter had made a sham discovery; that they had a great mind to have drawn me in for a share in the business, but that I slipt my neck out of the collar; and that being touch'd with a most ardent affection for what so nearly concern'd him,

I came to forwarn him to stand upon his guard. Then, moralising, I made a solemn discourse upon the numbers of wicked people one sees every day here below ; that, as for my part, being tired with the world, and the vile life I had lived in it, I was desirous to take some pains for the good of my soul, to retire from all hurry, and to be near some good man or other, with whom I might spin out my days in peace ; that if he thought well of it, I should desire nothing more than to spend the rest of my life in his family ; and that also he had gain'd upon my affections so far, that, without asking a farthing of wages to serve him, I would place in his hands, as knowing it to be safe there, some small matter my father had left me, and what I had got in service ; of which, if it pleased heaven to take me hence, I was fully determin'd to make him sole heir. This was the true way to come at his heart ; and that your mistress and you might compare notes together, what course you are to take to bring your matters to bear, I was willing you should have a private interview ; he himself has contrived to open me a way, which is pleasant enough, to bring you fairly and openly to her lodgings ; happening to entertain me with an account of a son of his that's dead, and whom, in a dream last night, he saw come to life again : upon this occasion you shall hear the story he told me, and upon which I've just now form'd our stratagem.

Lelius. Enough, I know it all ; thou hast told it me twice already.

Mascaril. Yes, yes, but should I tell it thrice, it may happen still, that your wit, with all it's sufficiency, may falter in some circumstance or other.

Lelius. But I put a force upon myself in deferring so long.

Masfcaril. Poh ! pray, not quite so fast, for fear we should happen to trip. You've a noddle, do ye see, that's a little of the thickest: endeavour to be staunch in this same adventure: 'tis a considerable time since Trufaldin left Naples, he then called himself Zanobio Ruberti. A certain party that rais'd a civil commotion, of which he was only suspected by the city, (in fact he's not a man to disturb any state) obliged him to leave the town by night without any bustle. A daughter of his very young, and his wife being left behind, he received the news some time after of their being both dead ; and under this great affliction, being desirous to carry along with him to some other town not only his effects, but also the only hope left of his family, a young son of his, bred a scholar, whose name was Horace ; he writ to Bologna, where, for his greater improvement, a certain tutor, nam'd Albert, had the education of the youth : but though time and place were settled for their meeting, two whole years pass'd without seeing any thing of them ; insomuch that, after so long time believing them dead, he came to this city, where he took the name he now bears, without ever discovering the least tidings either of this Albert or his son Horace, for twelve long years. This then is the story in gross, only repeated over again, that you might be surer in the ground-work. Now, you're to be an Armenian merchant, who have seen them both safe and sound in Turkey. If I've trump'd up this expedient of bringing them to life again, rather than any other, according to his dream, 'tis because in cases of adventures, 'tis the commonest thing in the world to see people taken at sea by some corsair of Turkey, and afterwards restored to their families in the very nick of time, after having been thought lost for fifteen

or twenty years. For my part, I've seen a hundred of these kind of stories; let us make use of one of them, which will stand us in good stead, without racking our brains farther. You are to have heard the story of their being made slaves, and to have furnish'd them with money to redeem themselves; but having set out before them upon an urgent business, Horace gave you in charge to visit his father here, whose circumstances he had learn'd, and with whom you were to stay a few days till their arrival. I've given you a long lesson here.

Lelius. These repetitions are superfluous. I comprehended the whole business at first sight.

Mascaril, I will go to his house, and strike the first stroke.

Lelius. Hark'e, Mascaril, there's only one point troubles me; suppose he should ask me to describe his son's person?

Mascaril. A pretty thing to puzzle about! Should you not know that he was very little when he saw him? And then besides, mayn't length of time and slavery have intirely alter'd him?

Lelius. 'Tis true. But pray, if he should remember he has seen me, what must I do then?

Mascaril. What, have you lost your memory? I told you, but just now, that (besides his only having a transient view of you could make no great impression, not having seen you above a minute) both your beard and your drefs would disguise you infinitely.

Lelius. Very well. But, now I think of it; what part of Turkey? ---

Mascaril. 'Tis equal I tell you, Turkey or Barbary.

Lelius. But the name of the town where I am to have seen him?

Mascaril. Tunis. He'll keep me all day, I think ; repeating it so often is needless, says he, and yet I've repeated the town's name to him a dozen times already.

Lelius. Go, go, begin then : I want nothing more.

Mascaril. At least be cautious, and conduct yourself wisely. Let's have none of your inventions here.

Lelius. Let me alone for management. How suspicious thou art always !

Mascaril. Horace, a student at Bologna, Trufaldin, Zanobio Ruberti, a citizen of Naples. The tutor one Albert.

Lelius. For shame, this is downright scandal upon me, to keep such a preaching to me ; do'st thou take me for a blockhead ?

Mascaril. Not a finish'd one ; but really something a little bordering upon it.

SCENE II.

LELIUS alone.

WHEN I've no occasion for him, he cringes like a spaniel ; but now, because he very well knows what assistance he gives me, his familiarity grows thus absolutely licentious. ----- I am now going into the full sunshine of those bright eyes, whose power has impos'd upon me so delightful a servitude : I am now going, without hindrance, to paint, in the most glowing colours, the torments of my heart : I shall then know what doom --- But here they are.

SCENE III.

TRUFALDIN, LELIUS, MASCARIL,

TRUFALDIN.

THANKS, righteous heav'n! for this favourable turn of my fortune.

Mascaril. You are the man who should see visions, and dream dreams; since in you 'tis false that dreams are falsehoods.

Trufaldin to Lelius.] What thanks, what satisfaction shall I give you, Sir? You, whom I ought to stile the good angel of my happiness?

Lelius. This concern is needless, I freely discharge you.

Trufaldin to Mascaril.] I have seen some-body, I don't know where, something resembling this Armenian.

Mascaril. That's what I was saying; but one sees surprizing likenesses sometimes.

Trufaldin. You have really seen this son of mine, this stay of my hope?

Lelius. Yes, signior Trufaldin, one of the briskest men in the world.

Trufaldin. He gave you the history of his life, and spoke much about me?

Lelius. More than ten thousand times.

Mascaril aside to Lelius.] Something less, I'm apt to believe.

Lelius. He described you, just as I see you; your face, your air ---

Trufaldin. Was it possible, since the latest he could

see me was seven years old? And his tutor himself, after so long time, would have much ado to know my face?

Mascaril. One's own flesh and blood preserves this image in anotherwise manner; this likeness is imprinted in lines so strong, that my father --

Trufaldin. Enough -- where was it you left him?

Lelius. In Turkey at Turin.

Trufaldin. Turin? But that town, I think, is in Piedmont.

Mascaril aside.] Oh the numskul! [To Trufaldin.] -- You don't understand him; he means Tunis; and it was in reality there he left your son: but the Armenians have all, through custom, a particular vicious pronunciation, harsh enough to us other nations; and that is, that in all their words they change a *nis* into a *sin*; and so instead of saying Tunis, they pronounce Turin.

Trufaldin. It was necessary to be let into this, to understand him -- What way did he direct you to meet with his father!

Mascaril aside.] See if the oaf has one word to answer! [To Trufaldin, after pretending to fence.] I was just practising a lesson at small-sword; formerly there was not a man in Christendom could match me at that diversion; and I've play'd a foil in many and many a fencing-school.

Trufaldin to Mascaril.] That's not the thing I want to know at present ---- [To Lelius.] What other name did he say I might have?

Mascaril. Ah! signior Zenobio Ruberti, what joy is that which heaven has now sent you!

Lelius. That's your true name; the other is borrowed.

Trufaldin. But where did he tell you that he first saw the light?

Mascaril. Naples seems a most agreeable place of abode; but for your part, it ought to be your utter aversion.

Trufaldin. Can'st thou not hold thy prattling, and let us go on with our discourse?

Lelius. Naples is the place where he first began his course.

Trufaldin. Where did I send him in his infancy? and under whose tuition?

Mascaril. That poor Albert deserves highly of you, for having accompanied your son from Bologna, to whose discretion your fatherly care had committed him.

Trufaldin. Pshaw! ----

Mascaril aside.] We are undone if this conversation lasts long.

Trufaldin. I would be glad to be informed concerning their adventure: aboard what vessel providence, which ordered things so happily ---

Mascaril. I don't know what's the matter, I do nothing but yawn; but, signior Trufaldin, do you consider that, probably, this gentleman stranger may want some refreshment? and 'tis late too?

Lelius. No refreshment for me.

Mascaril. Oh! Sir, you're more hungry than you imagine.

Trufaldin. Please to walk in then.

Lelius. After you.

Mascaril to Trufaldin.] Sir, in Armenia the masters of the house use no ceremony, [To Lelius, after Trufaldin is gone into the house.] You, poor mortal, what not two words?

Lelius. He surprized me, just at first; but ben't any longer concern'd; I have rally'd my spirits, and am going to rattle away boldly ---

Mascaril. Here comes our rival, who knows nothing of our plot, [They go into Trufaldin's house.

SCENE IV.

ANSELM, LEANDER.

ANSELM, LEANDER.
STAY, Leander, and suffer a discourse, which aims at nothing but your peace and reputation for life. I speak not as the father of my daughter, as a man interested for my own family; but as your own father, solicitous for your welfare, without a design of flattering, or imposing upon you in any thing; in short, with an open and honest heart, as I would with every one should deal with my own flesh and blood, in the like case. Are you sensible with what eye every body regards this amour of yours, which, in one night's time, has been blaz'd all about town? To what tittle-tattle, and sneers your last night's adventure has been every where expos'd? What judgment people form of that capricious choice, which, say they, has pitch'd upon a person here for a wife, who is the scum of Egypt, a strolling wench, whose noble employment is only the trade of a beggar? I really blush'd for you, even more than I did for myself, who find myself involved here in this scandalous uproar; myself, I say, whose daughter, being promised you in marriage, cannot bear a slight upon her, without being affronted at it. For shame,

Leander, quit these mean-spirited ways; open your eyes a little; if none of us are wise at all times, yet the shortest errors are always the best: when a man has no portion with his wife, but beauty only, repentance is at the heels of wedlock; and the handsomest woman in the world has little defence against the indifference which succeeds enjoyment: I tell it you once more, these fervent transports, youthful ardours, and ecstasies, may furnish us out a few agreeable nights at first; but this bliss is by no means lasting, and, our passion abating it's speed after luscious nights, gives us but nauseous days; then succeed cares, anxieties, miseries, sons disinherited by the resentment of fathers.

Leander. Through your whole discourse, I've heard not a word which my own mind has not represented to me already. I know how much I'm indebted for the great honour you design me, and of which I am not worthy; and see, in spite of all opposition my passion may give me, how great your daughter's worth and virtue is; nay, I'm resolv'd too to endeavour ---

Anselm. Some-body opens this door, let's retire to some distance, for fear some secret poison proceed from it, that may seize you at unawares.

SCENE V.

LELIUS, MASCARIL.

MASCARIL.

WE shall presently see a shipwreck of our knavery, if you persist in these palpable blunders.

Lelius. Am I eternally to hear these reprimands of

thine? what can'st thou complain of? have I not succeeded in every thing I said since ---

Mascaril. So, so: witness the Turks, whom you call'd heretics, and who, you affirm'd, on your corporeal oath, worship'd the sun and moon for their gods. Let that pass: what frets me beyond measure is, that your love, when with Celia, makes you strangely forget yourself: 'tis just like boiling pap, which, by too fierce a fire, swells, mounts up to the brim, and runs over all around.

Lelius. Could one force one's self to a more thorough reserve? I hardly spoke to her afterwards.

Mascaril. Right; but 'tis not enough, not to speak; by your gestures, during the short time of supper, you gave greater reason for suspicion than other people would have done in a whole twelve-month.

Lelius. And how so?

Mascaril. How so? every body might see it. At table, where Trufaldia would force her to sit down, you never kept your eyes off her, blush'd, were out of countenance, look'd babies in her eyes without minding what people help'd you to; you were never thirsty but when she drank; and greedily seizing the glass whilst in her hands, without rinsing it, or throwing a drop of it away, you drank her leavings, and seem'd to affect that side of the glass which she had carry'd to her lips; you laid your paw as quick upon every morsel of bread her fine hand had touch'd, or her teeth intended, as a cat would do upon a mouse, and swallow'd them as glib, as a man would do green pease. Then, besides all this, you made an intolerable noise of tic-tac, with your feet under the table; with which Trufaldin happening to have two kicks, something of the hardest, twice punish'd two in-

nocent currs, who would have snarl'd at you, if they durst; and then, after this, was your behaviour decent? For my part, my body was upon the rack; notwithstanding the cold season, I work'd till I sweat again; I hung over you just as a bowler does over his bowl, after he has deliver'd it, and thought to give you a rub, by a thousand distortions of my body.

Lelius. Lack-a-day, how easy it is to condemn things, of which you don't feel the enchanting cause! - I've a good mind, nevertheless, (once to humour thee) to put a force upon that love, which, at other times, I must obey: henceforward ---

SCENE VI.

LELIUS, MASCARIL, TRUFALDIN.

MASCARIL.

WE were just talking over the variety of Horace's fortune.

Trufaldin to Lelius.] It was kindly done. In the mean time, will you grant me the favour of only one word with him there in private?

Lelius. I must be very inconsiderate if I should not.

[Lelius goes into Trufaldin's house.]

SCENE VII.

TRUFALDIN, MASCARIL.

TRUFALDIN.

HARK ye, dost thou know what I have just been doing?

Mascaril. No; but certainly, if you think proper, I shan't remain long in ignorance.

Trufaldin. From a large sturdy oak, of near two hundred years standing, I have now cut off an admirable branch, cull'd out for the purpose, of a reasonable thickness; of which, with great eagerness, upon the spot, I made a cudgel, near upon --- Yes, full of this largeness, [shewing his arm,] a little taper towards one end; but, as I take it, worth a hundred saplins, to belabour the shoulders withal; for 'tis well pois'd, green, knotty, and massy.

Mascaril. But for whom, I beseech you, all this preparation?

Trufaldin. For thyself, first of all; then, secondly, for that pious missionary who would palm one person upon me, and trick me out of another; for this Armenian, this merchant in disguise, introduc'd with the bait of a counterfeit story.

Mascaril. How! don't you believe? ---

Trufaldin. Don't cast about for an excuse, he himself, by good luck, discover'd his own cheat, in telling Celia, whilst he squeezed her hand at the same time, that 'twas for her sake alone he came disguis'd in this manner. He didn't mind my little god-daughter Jen-

ny, who heard all word for word. I make no doubt on't, though he happened not to mention it, but thou art the cursed accomplice in all this.

Mascaril. Indeed, you do me wrong. If you are really abus'd, believe me, he impos'd first upon me with this story.

Trufaldin. Would you convince me you speak truth? Second my blows, and drive him away; let's give it the rascal back-stroke and fore-stroke, thence-forward I quit thee of all share in the crime.

Mascaril. Ay, ay, with all my soul, I'll dust his jacket for him purely; and by that you shall see I've had no hand in this matter. [Aside.] Ah! monsieur Armenian, you shall have a drubbing-bout, for a marr-all, as you always are.

SCENE VIII.

LELIUS, TRUFALDIN, MASCARIL.

TRUFALDIN to Lelius, after having knock'd at his door.

A WORD with you, pray: so, Mr. Bite. you've the assurance now to dupe an honest gentleman, and make your game of him, heh?

Mascaril. To pretend to have seen his son in another country, only to get more easy admittance into his family!

Trufaldin beating Lelius.] I'll pay you, I'll be even with you presently.

Lelius to Mascaril, who beats him likewise.] Oh! the scoundrel!

Mascaril. It's thus your cheats ---

Lelius. Villain!

Mascaril. Are serv'd here. Keep that for my sake.

Lelius. How then! Am I a gentleman? —

[Mascaril beating him, and driving him off.] March off, be gone, I tell you, or I shall beat your brains out.

Trufaldin. This pleases me to the life, come in, I'm thoroughly satisfy'd.

[Mascaril follows Trufaldin into his house.]

Lelius returning.] This to me! this glaring affront by a servant! Could one have thought the traitor would have behav'd thus, to proceed thus insolently to abuse his master?

[Mascaril from Trufaldin's window.] May one ask, without offence, how fare your shoulders?

Lelius. What! hast thou the impudence to prate to me still in that manner?

Mascaril. See then, see what it is not to mind little Jenny, and to have a blabbing tongue always, without discretion; but this time I'm not angry with you, I've done scolding and swearing at you; though the folly of the action is complete, yet my hand has expiated the fault upon your shoulders.

Lelius. Hah! I'm determin'd to take vengeance for this undutiful assault.

Mascaril. You yourself have brought all this mischief upon your own head.

Lelius. I?

Mascaril. Had you not been a shallow-brains, when you were talking heedlessly to your idol, you would have perceiv'd Jenny at your heels, whose quickness of hearing discovered the whole affair.

Lelius. Could any-body possibly catch one word I spoke to Celia?

Mascaril. And whence else could proceed this klicking you out o' doors all of a sudden? Yes, you're shut out by your own tittle-tattle: I don't know whether you play often at picquet, but you have an admirable knack at discarding.

Lelius. Oh! most unfortunate of all wretches! But why again must I but turn'd out by thee?

Mascaril. I never did better than in taking that task upon me; by this means, at least, I prevent all suspicion of being author, or accomplice, in this piece of artifice.

Lelius. You should therefore, for your share, have laid me on more gently.

Mascaril. What an ass! Why, Trufaldin leer'd at us most narrowly: and then I must tell you, under this pretence of serving you, I was not at all displeas'd to vent my spleen; in short, the thing is over, and if I have your word that you will never pretend, directly or indirectly, to revenge those blows over the scut, which I gave you home with so hearty a good-will, then do I covenant with you, by the assistance of the post I am in, to complete your wishes, before two nights more pass over your head.

Lelius. Though thy treatment of me was the most shocking, yet what would not such a promise prevail upon me to do?

Mascaril. You promise it then?

Lelius. Yes, I do promise it.

Mascaril. But this is not all yet: promise that you will never meddle or make with any thing I take in hand.

Lelius. It is done.

Mascaril. If you are tardy, may a quartan ague ---

Lelius. But be as good as thy word with me, and contrive how to make me easy.

Mascaril. Go throw off your habit, and 'noint your back a little.

Lelius alone.] Must that ill-fortune, which is ever at my heels, always present me with disgrace upon disgrace?

Mascaril, coming out of Trufaldin's house.] What? not gone yet? hence immediately; but, of all things, take special care not to take any care at all, since I'm o' your side, let that satisfy you; don't stir a foot by the way of helping me forward; be at quiet.

Lelius going.] Yes, yes; about thy business; I'll stick to that.

Mascaril alone.] Now let me see what course I am to steer.

SCENE IX.

ERGASTUS, MASCARIL.

ERGASTUS.

MASCARIL, I come to tell thee a piece of news, which will give a cruel blow to thy projects; at this instant that I am talking to thee, a young gypsy, who nevertheless is no black, and appears much like a gentleman, is arriv'd with a very pale-fac'd old woman, and is to call upon Trufaldin to repurchase the slave you'd a fancy for. He seems to be very eager for her.

Mascaril. Doubtless, 'tis the lover Celia spoke of. Were ever people's fortunes so embroil'd as ours are? No sooner clear of one incumbrance, but we fall into

another. In vain do we learn that Leander is upon the point of quitting the cause, and giving us no farther trouble; that his father being arriv'd, has, contrary to expectation, turn'd the balance on the side of Hippolyta: that he has made a thorough change of affairs by his authority; and is going, this very day, to finish the marriage treaty; when one rival withdraws, another more plaguy one comes, to deprive us of all our poor remains of hope. Nevertheless, by a surprizing cast of my art, I believe I shall be able to stop their journey for a while, and gain as much time, as will be necessary to attempt the finishing stroke to this famous affair. A great robbery has been lately committed, by whom, no-body knows. These sort o' people are seldom reckon'd so honest as they should be; I'll dextrously procure the droll's imprisonment for a few days, upon a frivolous suspicion. I know some gripping officers of justice, who are always deliberately prepar'd for such jobbs as these, with the greedy hope of some small present: there's nothing, in their way, that they won't attempt blindfold; be the person ever so innocent, the purse is always, for their profit, a criminal, and must pay the piper.

ACT V. SCENE I.

MASCARIL, ERGASTUS.

MASCARIL.

A STUPID cur! a cur of all curs! sap-headed beast! must we be eternally persecuted by you?

Ergastus. By the great care of the constable every

thing went smoothly : the wag was just coop'd, had not your master himself come in upon them that very instant, like a mad-man as he was, and utterly spoil'd thy plot : I can't bear it, cries he, with a blustering air, that an honest gentleman should be drag'd away in this disgraceful manner ; I answer for him, from his very looks, and will be his bail : and as they made some resistance rather than let go their man, presently he charg'd the Myrmidons, who are a sort of people much afraid of their carcases, so vigorously, that, even at this very time, they're a scampering, and every man thinks he has got a Lelius at his heels.

Mascaril. The booby don't dream now that this gypsy is already got there to Trufaldin's house, to carry off his treasure.

Ergastus. Good b'y, a certain business obliges me to leave thee.

S C E N E II.

M A S C A R I L alone.

YES ; this last monstrous accident has absolutely stunned me : one would think, and for my part, I'm clear in the matter, that this pragmatical devil, with which he's possess'd, delights to insult me, and hurries me this spark into every place where his presence can do mischief. Yet for all this, I'm determin'd to see it out, and, spite of all these strokes, try who shall carry the day, this Demon, or myself : Celia has something of a fellow-feeling with us, and looks upon her departure with great regret : I must endeavour to make

my ends of this : but here they come ; now for the execution. This well-furnished house here is at my beck, I can dispose of it with great freedom ; if fortune say the word, all will go well ; no-body but myself governs there, and I keep the key. Strange ! what a number of adventures have we seen in a little time ! and what variety of shapes is a sharper obliged to take !

SCENE III.

CELIA, ANDER.

ANDER.

YOU know, Celia, there is nothing my heart has left undone, to prove the excess of it's passion : when I was but very young, my courage in the wars gain'd me considerable esteem amongst the Venetians, and I might, one time or other, without flattering myself, have pretended to some employment of distinction, by continuing in the service : when lo, I forgot every thing for your sake, and the direct consequence of a disguise in dress, which follow'd the sudden change you made in my heart, was to prevail upon your lover to join himself to your gang ; nor has it been in the power of a thousand accidents, or even of your indifference, to break that inseparable attachment, which makes me for ever yours : since that, being, by an accident, parted from you for a much longer season than I could have foreseen, I've lost no time, and spar'd no pains to join you again : in short, having found out the old gypsy woman, and, full of impatience, made myself acquainted with your birth, that for a certain sum, which

was then of great service to them, and which prevented the ruin of your whole band, you were left as a pledge in these parts; I fly hither immediately to break these chains of servitude, and to receive from you whatever commands you are pleased to give: and here, at the same time, I find you pensive and melancholy, when your eyes ought to have sparkled with joy; if a retreat has any thing in it can allure you, I have sufficient at Venice, of the spoils taken in war, for us both to live on there: but if I must still follow you as before, you've my consent, and my heart shall have no ambition, but to be near you in whatever quality you please.

Celia. Your great affection for me discovers itself most clearly: to appear concern'd as it were to be ungrateful; and besides, the disturbance in my countenance does by no means speak the sense of my heart on this occasion. A violent head-ach has much ruffled it, and if I had the least influence upon you, our voyage should be suspended, at least three, or four days, till this indisposition had taken another turn.

Ander. Defer it as long as you think fit, every intention of mine is entirely bent to please you: let us see for a house where you may live at ease: hoh! here's a bill offers itself most *a propos*.

SCENE IV.

CELIA, ANDER, MASCARIL

disguis'd like a Suiss.

MONSIEUR **A**NDER. Suiss, are you master of this house?

Mascaril. Me be, at your service,

Ander. May we lodge here, pray?

Mascaril. Yes, me have de very good shambers, ready furnish for stranger, but me no loge de people scandaluse.

Ander. I believe your house is clear of all suspicion.

Mascaril. Me see by your face, you be one stranger in this town.

Ander. I am so.

Mascaril. Matame be shee marry'd to monsieu.

Ander. Sir?

Mascaril. Be she your wife, or your sister?

Ander. Neither.

Mascaril. Ma foy, she be very pritty; you come for marshandise, or, perhaps, for sue in de court of shuffice for your own: law-suit be one very bad ting, it come so dear; de solicitor de tief, and de counsellor de rogue.

Ander. 'Tis not for that, neither.

Mascaril. You bring dis lady den for comê take de walk, and for see de city?

Ander to Celia.] No matter what: I'll be with you again in a moment; I'll go fetch the old gentlewoman

presently; and countermand our baggage which was ready.

Mascaril, Matame, be she not vel?

Ander. She has got the head-ach.

Mascaril. Me have de very good vine, and de good cheefe; walk in, walk in to my litel ouse.

[Celia, Ander, and Mascaril go into the house.

SCENE V.

LELIUS alone.

HOW eager soever my impatient heart may be; my word obliges me to rest in expectation; to let another work for me, and see, without daring to stir, how heaven will dispose of my destiny.

SCENE VI.

ANDER, LELIUS.

LELIUS to Ander, coming out of the house.

WAS you inquiring for any-body in this dwelling?

Ander. 'Tis a ready furnish'd lodging, which I have hir'd but just now.

Lelius. The house for all that belongs to my father, and my servant lies there o' nights to guard it.

Ander. I know nothing of that; the bill, at least, shews 'tis to be let -- Read it.

Lelius. Very true, this surprizes me, I confess: who the duce could put it there? and to what purpose? ----

Hoh! faith, I guess, pretty near, what it means: this can't possibly proceed from any other quarter than what I conjecture.

Ander. May one be so bold to ask what affair this may be?

Lelius. I should make a great secret of it to any body else; but for you, it can be of no consequence, and you will be cautious how you speak of it: without doubt, the bill you see there, as far as I can guess, at least, can't be otherwise than an invention of the servant I am speaking of; nothing but an intricate knot, which should be of his knitting, to give me possession of a certain young gypsy, with whom I am smitten, and must gain her: I've mist of her hitherto, though I have made several pushes at her.

Ander. Her name is? ---

Lelius. Celia,

Ander. Hoh! why did you not say so? You'd nothing to do but speak out; without dispute I should have sav'd you all the trouble this project might cost you.

Lelius. How so? do you know her?

Ander. 'Tis I who have just now redeem'd her.

Lelius. You surprize me!

Ander. Her health not admitting of our leaving this place, I had just plac'd her in the lodgings you see; and I am exceedingly glad on this occasion, that you have let me into your design.

Lelius. How! shall I obtain the happiness I hope for, by your means? could you ---

Ander. going to knock at the door.] You shall be satisfy'd of that in an instant.

Lelius. What can I say to you? and what thanks ---

Ander. No, give me none, I'll have none.

S C E N E

SCENE VII.

LELIUS, ANDER, MASCARIL,

MASCARIL aside.

SOH! don't I see there my hair-brains of a master?
He'll play us some new trick again will undo us.

Lelius. In this grotesque dress who could have known him? Come hither, Mascaril, you're welcome,

Mascaril. Me be a man of honour, me no Masqueril, me never debauch one wife one dater.

Lelius. The drol gibberish! 'Tis admirable in troth!

Mascaril. You go about you business, and no make your las o' me.

Lelius. Go, go, away with your masque, and know your master.

Mascaril. Begar, me never no conoissance o' you.

Lelius. All matters are accommodated, disguise thyself no longer.

Mascaril. If you no marsh off, me give you one gran slap o' de shops.

Lelius. Thy Swiss jargon is needless, I tell thee, for we are agreed, and his generosity obliges me. I have every thing my heart could wish, and there's no reason for thee to be under any farther apprehensions.

Mascaril. If you are agreed, by great good luck, I then Un-Swiss myself and return to myself again.

Ander. This valet o' yours serv'd you with much zeal; please to stay a little, I'll return to you presently.

SCENE VIII.

LELIUS, MASCARIL.

LELIUS.

HOW now, Mascaril, what hast thou to say next?

Mascaril. That I'm in raptures to see our labours attended with good success.

Lelius. You made great scruple, truly, of quitting your disguise, and could hardly credit me in this event.

Mascaril. As I knew you pretty well, I had some terrors upon me; and must still own the adventure is surprizing enough.

Lelius. But confess, however, that I have done great things at the upshot; at least I've made amends for my miscarriages by this master-piece, and I shall have this honour, to give the finishing stroke to the work.

Mascaril. Let it be so, you'll be much more lucky than wise.

SCENE IX.

CELIA, ANDER, LELIUS, MASCARIL.

ANDER.

IS not this the beloved person you were speaking of to me?

Lelius. Heavens! what happiness can be equal to mine!

Ander. 'Tis very true, I am greatly indebted to you for the favour you've done me, did not I acknowledge

it, I should be much to blame: but in short, the favour would be hardly earn'd, where I to repay it at the price of my heart. Judge in the transports her beauty gives me, whether I ought to discharge my debt at such an expence; you are generous yourself, yet you would not do the like. Farewel. For a few days, let us return from whence we came.

SCENE X.

LELIUS, MASCARIL.

MASCARIL after singing some time.

I SING, and at the same time I have little inclination to't; you are admirably agreed, he gives ye up Celia: hem! you understand me, Sir.

Lelius. 'Tis too much, I am determin'd to ask no more assistance, since 'tis thrown away upon me; I'm a puppy, a traitor, a detestable blockhead, not worthy any body's care, utterly incapable of business: go, cease attempting any thing for an ill contriv'd mortal, who won't suffer any person to make him happy; after so many misfortunes, and so much folly, death should be the only assistant left me.

SCENE XI.

MASCARIL alone.

THERE he hit the true way of making his fortune for good and all; there wants nothing, in short, but the single folly of dying, to crown all the rest. But

in vain does his indignation against his sins committed, urge him to discharge me from all care, or attempts to support him ; I'm resolv'd, be he what he will, to help him in spite of him, and vanquish the very de'el that's in him : greater the opposition, greater the glory ; and difficulties are but a kind of tire-women, who deck and adorn virtue.

SCENE XII.

CELIA, MASCARIL.

CELIA to Mascaril, who had been whispering to her.

SAY what you will, and propose what one can, I expect very little from these delays ; the success we have seen hitherto, may sufficiently convince one, that they are not as yet in any likelihood of coming to agreement : and I have told you already that a heart form'd as mine is, will not, for the sake of one, do injustice to another ; and that I find myself strongly attach'd, by different ties, to both parties ; if Lelius has love and riches on his side, Ander has gratitude for his share, which will not permit me even in the most secret thought, ever to consult any thing against his interests : yes, if he has no more a place in my soul, if the gift of my heart must not crown his love, at least I owe this reward to what he has done for me, not to choose another in contempt of his constancy ; and that I should offer the same violence to my own inclinations, as I do to his, of which he has given the strongest evidence. Upon these difficulties which my duty throws in my way, judge what thou art to allow thyself to hope for.

Mascaril. To say the truth, these are ugly sort of rubs in our way, and I have not the knack of working miracles; but I'll go employ my utmost efforts, leave no stone unturn'd, put the thing in all possible lights, and try to find out some wholesome expedient; I shall tell you presently what's to be done in this matter.

S C E N E XIII.

HIPPOLYTA, CELIA.

HIPPOLYTA.

EVER since you've been among us, the ladies here may complain, very justly, of the robberies committed by your eyes; since you deprive them of their darling conquests, and make traitors of their lovers. There's not a heart can escape the darts with which you've the art of striking people at first sight; the liberties of thousands offering themselves to your chains, seem to enrich you daily at our expence. As to myself, however, I should make no complaints of the tyranny of your superior charms, if, when you have gain'd both my lovers, one of them had but given me consolation for the loss of the other; but thus inhumanely to bereave me of them both, are hard lines, of which I take the liberty to complain to you.

Celia. Madam, you rally with a good grace, but have a little mercy, I beseech you, on your humble servant: those eyes, those very eyes of yours, know their own power too well, to apprehend any thing from what I'm able to do; they are too conscious of their own charms, to take alarm at such trifles.

Hippolyta. And yet I have advanced nothing in what I've said, which has not already happen'd in every heart; and, without naming the rest, 'tis well known that Celia has made deep impressions both upon Leander and Lelius.

Celia. I believe you'll find no great difficulty to make yourself easy at the loss of persons who've made such a blind mistake, and will find a lover not worth your valuing, who is capable of making so ill a choice.

Hippolyta. On the contrary, I act with a quite different air; I find so great merit in your beauty, and see so many reasons sufficient to excuse the inconstancy of those who are insensibly won by it, that I can't blame that change of passion, by which Leander has broken the vows he made me; and I am just going, without hatred or fury, to see him recall'd to his obedience by the authority of a father.

SCENE XIV.

CELIA, HIPPOLYTA, MASCARIL.

MASCARIL.

GREAT, great news! and surprizing success that I am now going to tell you!

Celia. What is it then?

Mascaril. Hark'ee, you have here without flattery—

Celia. What?

Mascaril. The winding up of a true and genuine comedy; the old gypsy-woman, but this very moment—

Celia. well?

Mascaril. Was crossing the square, thinking no harm, when another baggard old woman poring in her face a

long while, at nose-length, by the hoarse noise of Billingsgate gave the signal for a furious combat : who instead of arms, musquet, dagger, and spear, only brandish'd in the air four wither'd talons, with which these two combatants labour'd their utmost to tear off the little flesh time had left on their bones : not a word could one hear, but bitch, whore, and dirty drab : off fly the quoifs immediately, which leaving a couple of bald-pates naked to view, render'd the battle ridiculously horrible. At the noise of the hubbub, Ander and Trufaldin, as a power of other people did, running to see what was the matter, had enough to do to part them ; so furiously were they driven on by passion ; in the mean time each of them, when the storm was abated, strove to hide the disgrace of her head ; and every body wanted to know who began this whimsical fray ; she who had first rais'd the alarm, notwithstanding the heat of passion she was in, having fix'd her eyes a considerable time upon Trufaldin ; 'tis you, cries she, with a loud voice, if some delusion does not cheat my sight, who, I was inform'd, liv'd in these parts *incognito* ; most happy meeting ! Yes, Zanobio Ruberti, by good luck I've found you out in the very instant when I was giving myself so much torment for your sake : when you left your family at Naples, I had, you know, your daughter in my keeping, whom I brought up during her infancy, and who discovered, at four years of age, a gracefulness and charming behaviour, by a thousand little actions : she whom you see there, that infamous hagg, making herself very familiar in my family, stole away that treasure from me. Your lady, alas ! as I have reason to believe, gave way to such an excess of grief at this affliction, that it helped to shorten her

days; so that this little daughter stole out of my custody, made me dread your severe reproaches, and order it should be given out to you that they were both dead; but 'tis necessary now I have found her out that she discover what is become of her. At the name of Zanobio Ruberti, which she repeated several times throughout the story, Ander having changed countenance for some time, addressed himself to the surpris'd Trufaldin in these words: What then! has heaven most happily directed me to find him whom I have hitherto sought in vain, and could I behold the source of my blood, the author of my being, and yet not know him again! Yes, my father, I am Horace, your son: Alberti my tutor having ended his days, and perceiving several other inquietudes growing upon me, I left Bologna, and quitting my studies, wander'd about for six years, through different places, just as the strength of curiosity moved me. Nevertheless, after this, a secret instinct prompted me to revisit my kindred and my country: but at Naples, alas! I could no more find you, nor know what was become of you, but by confused reports; so that having lost my labour in search of you, Venice, for a while, put a stop to my fruitless roving; and from that time to this I have liv'd without having the least light into my family, any farther than knowing the name. I leave you to judge whether Trufaldin was not more than ordinary transported all this while; in a word, to cut the matter short, which you'll have the opportunity of informing yourselves about more at leisure, from the confession of your old gypsy-woman, Trufaldin owns you now for his daughter; Ander is your brother; and as he can no longer think of enjoying his sister, an obligation he is pleas'd to own, has prevail'd with him to

gain the point of your marriage with my young master, whose father being a witness of the whole transaction, gives his full consent to this match; and to complete the joy of his family, he has propos'd his daughter to the new-found Horace. Here are a number of incidents for you at one birth!

Celia. So many novelties perfectly astonish me.

Mascaril. The whole company is at my heels, except the two she-champions, who are still refreshing themselves after the fatigue of battle: Leander is among them, as is also your father. I'll go inform my master of this, and tell him that when matters were look'd upon as strongest against him, heaven has almost wrought a miracle in his favour. *[Exit Mascarille.]*

Hippolyta. The joy of this overwhelms me so, that were it my own case, I could not be more delighted. But here they come.

SCENE XV.

TRUFALDIN, ANSELM, PANDOLPH,
CELIA, HIPPOLYTA, LEANDER,
ANDER.

TRUFALDIN.

MY child!

Celia. My father!

Trufaldin. Dost thou know how much heaven has blessed us?

Celia. I've just been inform'd here of the wonderful adventure.

Hippolyta to Leander.] It would be in vain to make

speeches in excuse for your passion, when I have before my eyes all you can say.

Leander. I desire only a generous pardon ; and protest to heaven, that in this sudden return, my father hath little influence in comparison with my own inclination.

Ander to Celia.] Who would ever have believed that so chaste a love could one day be condemn'd by nature ? However, 'twas regulated by so much honour, that with a small variation I may still retain it.

Celia. For my part, I blam'd myself, and thought I committed a fault in having no more than a very high esteem for you ; I could not comprehend what powerful lett stopt me in a path so pleasant and so slippery ; and diverted my heart from the approbation of a flame, which my senses made so strong efforts to introduce into my soul.

Trufaldin to Celia.] But now I have found thee, what will my child say of me, if I am thinking immediately to part with thee, and engage thee in the laws of wedlock to this gentleman's son ?

Celia. Only that my destiny now depends on you.

SCENE THE LAST.

TRUFALDIN, ANSELM, PANDOLPH, CELIA, HIPPOLYTA, LELIUS, LEANDER, ANDER, MASCARIL.

MASCARIL to Lelius.

NOW let's see whether this devil o' yours will be able this bout to defeat a hope so solid ; and whether your fruitful invention will again arm itself against this excess of good-luck that's come to us ? By a most unexpected favourable turn of fortune, your desires are crowned, and Celia is yours.

Lelius. Am I to believe that the absolute power of heaven ? —

Trufaldin. Yes, my son, 'tis really so.

Pandolph. The matter is determined.

Ander to Lelius.] By this I have acquitted myself of what I owe you.

Lelius to Mascaril.] I must embrace thee a thousand, and a thousand times, in this excess of joy —

Mascaril. Oh ! oh ! gently, I beseech you ; he has almost stifled me : I'm terribly afraid for Celia, if you clasp her with so much eagerness : one would be glad to excuse such embraces.

Trufaldin to Lelius.] You know the happiness with which heaven has blest me in particular ; but since one and the same day has given joy to us all, let us not part till 'tis ended, and let Leander's father also be sent for immediately.

Mascaril. Here, are you all provided for ? and is

there ne'er a snug wench, that may accommodate poor Mascaril? It gives me too a strange itch to matrimony, to see every Jack have his Gill.

Anselm. I've one will do thy business exactly.

Mascaril.

Come on, my brave boys, and may heaven think fitting,
To send us sweet babes of our proper begetting.

THE END.

7 MA 55

THE
AMOROUS QUARREL.

A
COMEDY.

A C T O R S.

ALBERTO, Father to Ascanius and Lucilia.

POLIDOR, Father to Valere.

LUCILIA, Daughter to Alberto.

ASCANIUS, Alberto's daughter, in man's habit.

ERASTUS, in love with Lucilia.

VALERE, Son to Polidor.

MARINETTA, Maid to Lucilia.

FROSINA, Confident to Ascanius.

METOPHRASTUS, a Pedant.

GROS-RENARD, Servant to Erastus.

MASCARIE, Servant to Valere.

RAPIÈRE, a Bully.

SCENE, PARIS.



[III]
T H E

AMOROUS QUARREL.

ACT I. SCENE I.

ERASTUS, GROS-RENARD.

ERASTUS.

WOULD'ST thou have me tell thee? Why
I have a secret malady then which never
leaves my mind at true ease. Yes, though
you may make a jest of my love, to say the truth, I
am afraid of it's being injur'd; that thy fidelity may be
corrupted in favour of a rival, or at least that thou
may'st be deceiv'd as well as I.

Gros-Renard. For my part I must needs say, no of-
fence to your honour's love, that to suspect me of any
knavish cast, is to wound my integrity very unjustly,
and to shew little skill in physiognomy. People of my
bulk are seldom accus'd, thank heaven, of being either
knaves or plotters. Neither do I belye that honour
which is done us, but am a round man in all respects. As
to their deceiving me, that may very likely be; the
suspicion is well founded; nevertheless I don't believe
it. I'm a dog if I can yet see upon what you have
been able to take this chimera in your head. Lucilia,
in my opinion, shews love enough for you, she sees you,
talks to you every hour of the day; and Valerio, after

all, who is the cause of your fear, seems to be suffer'd at present only through constraint.

Eraustus. A lover is often fed with false hope. The best receiv'd are not always the most belov'd. Whatever affection women may shew, 'tis often but a fine veil to cover their passion for others. In short, Valere has lately shewn too much tranquillity for a repuls'd lover; and as to his shewing joy, or at least indifference, at those favours which you think done to me, 'tis what poisons continually their greatest charms to me, gives me an anxiety which thou dost not comprehend, holds my happiness in suspense, and makes an entire confidence in what Lucilia says very difficult to me. To think my destiny truly happy, I would see him transported with jealousy a little; and from his displeasure and impatience my heart would then receive full assurance. Dost thou thyself think it possible for any one to see a rival caressed, as he does, with a contented mind? And if thou believest nothing of it, yet tell me, I conjure thee, if I have room to be perplexed about this affair.

Gros-Renard. Perhaps he has chang'd his inclinations, knowing that he sigh'd in vain.

Eraustus. When a heart is set free by repulses, it flies the object with which it was affected, and does not break it's chain with so little trouble as to be able to continue in a peaceable state: our having been fond before of the fatal presence, prevents our being ever left in indifference; and if our disdain does not increase at the sight of her we lov'd, our love is very near returning again; in short, believe me, though our flame be extinguish'd never so well, a little jealousy still dwells in

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the breast; and one can't see, without concern, the heart which we have miss'd of, possess'd by another.

Gros-Renard. For my part, I don't understand so much philosophy; what my eyes see, I freely believe, and am not such a mortal enemy to myself, as to go to disturb myself without a cause, or so much as half a cause. Why should one refine so much, and labour to be able to find out reasons to be miserable? Shall I go to alarm myself about castles in the air? Let Lent come, before we keep it. The spleen appears to me to be an incommodious thing; and, for my part, I never entertain it without good and just cause; and truly a hundred things very frequently come in my sight to give it me, which I don't think fit to see. I run the same risque in love as you do, and the concern you have ought to be common to me; the mistress can't abuse your fidelity, but that the maid will do the same by me; but I avoid the thought of it with an extreme deal of care. I am willing to believe people when they say, I love thee, and don't go to inquire, in order to esteem myself happy if Mascarille tears his hair off of his head or not. Let Marinetta but suffer herself to be kiss'd and caress'd by Gros-Renard at pleasure, and let that fine rival laugh at it like a fool; I'll laugh my belly-full at it likewise after his example; and see who laughs with the best grace.

Eraustus. This is like thy talk.

Gros-Renard. But here I see her coming.

SCENE II.

ERASTUS, MARINETTA, GROS-RENARD.

GROS-RENARD.

HIST! Marinetta.

Marinetta. Heyday! what do you do there?

Gros-Renard. D'ye ask? faith, we are just now upon you.

Marinetta. Are you there too, Sir? Let me die if you have not made me trot about like a Biscay porter for this hour past.

Erastus. How so?

Marinetta. I have walk'd ten miles to look for you, and promise you in good troth —

Erastus. What?

Marinetta. That you was neither at church, at court, at home, nor in the grand walk.

Gros-Renard. You may swear it.

Erastus. Inform me then, pr'ythee, who made you look for me.

Marinetta. One, in good truth, who has not too much ill-will for you? in one word, my mistress.

Erastus. Ah, dear Marinetta! is thy discourse the true interpreter of her heart? Don't disguise from me a fatal mystery; I should not wish thee any evil for it: for heaven's sake tell me, if thy charming mistress does not abuse my vows with a false tenderness?

Marinetta. Ha, ha, ha! whence came this merry motion upon you? Does she not sufficiently shew her

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inclination? what security is there further that your love demands? what would it have?

Gros-Renard. That Valere hang himself at least; without such a trifle as this, his heart won't rest assur'd.

Marinetta. How so?

Gros-Renard. He's jealous to such a degree.

Marinetta. Of Valere? hah! truly the fancy is very fine! It could only be hatch'd in your brain. I thought you a man of sense, and till this moment had a good opinion of your wit, but by what I see I was very much deceiv'd. Is thy head touch'd with this distemper too?

Gros-Renard. I jealous! heaven defend me from it, and from being so mad as to go and make myself lean with such a concern: besides that thy fidelity assures me of thy heart, the opinion I have of myself is too good to believe that any other could please thee after me: where the duce could you find one equal to me?

Marinetta. In truth, you say right, that's as it should be: a jealous man should never discover his suspicions; all the fruit he gathers from it is to disturb himself, and by the same means advance the designs of a rival: your spleen often opens a mistress's eyes to a merit, the brightness of which hurts yourselves; and I know one who owes his gentle destiny to the too great uneasiness of his jealous rival. In short, be it as it will, to shew suspicion in love is to play a very bad part, and after all to make one's self miserable upon trust. This, Erastus, is said to you by the bye.

Erastus. Very well, let us talk no more of it. What have you to say to me?

Marinetta. You justly deserve to be made to wait: and that to punish you, I should keep conceal'd from

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you the grand secret which has made me hunt for you so much : here, see this letter, and be out of doubt ; read it aloud, for here's no-body listens.

Eraustus reads.] " You told me your love was capable
" of doing any thing. It may be crown'd this very
" day, if it can but get my father's consent. Declare
" the power you have over my heart, I give you licence
" to do it ; and if it turns in your favour, I shall an-
" swer you with my obedience."— Ah ! what good
fortune is this ! for you that brought it me, I ought to
regard thee as a deity.

Gros-Renard. I told you so : contrary to your be-
lief, I'm seldom deceiv'd in things that I think.

Eraustus reading it again.] " Declare the power you
" have over my heart, I give you licence to do it ; and
" if it turns in your favour, I shall answer you with my
" obedience."

Marinetta. If I should tell her of your weakness in
being jealous, she would immediately disown such a let-
ter as this.

Eraustus. No, pray conceal my rash fear from her,
for which I thought I saw some small matter of reason ;
or if you do tell it her, tell her at the same time that
I'm ready to expiate the error of this-madness with my
death, and that I'll sacrifice my life at her feet, if I have
been capable of displeasing her.

Marinetta. Let us not talk of death, this is no time
for it.

Eraustus. However I'm very much in thy debt, and
intend shortly to acknowledge in a handsome manner the
pains of so brave and lovely a messenger.

Marinetta. Well thought on : do you know where
I look'd for you just now ?

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Eraſtus. Hey —————

Marinetta. Very nigh the market, where you know.

Eraſtus. Where?

Marinetta. There——in that ſhop where your magnificent heart, ſeveral months ago, out of it's great bounty, promiſ'd me a ring.

Eraſtus. Um —— I underſtand you.

Gros-Renard. Cunning jade!

Eraſtus. 'Tis true, I have delay'd too long to make good my promiſe to thee. But ——

Marinetta. What I ſaid of it, Sir, is not to preſs you ———

Gros-Renard. Oh! no.

Eraſtus giving her his ring.] This may have ſomething in it to pleaſe thee, perhaps; accept of this for that which I owe thee.

Marinetta. You only jeſt, Sir, I ſhould be aſham'd to take it.

Gros-Renard. Poor ſhame-fac'd creature, take it without more ado. To reſuſe what is given one is to play the fool bravely.

Marinetta. I'll only do it that I may keep ſomething for your ſake then.

Eraſtus. When may I return thanks to that dear angel?

Marinetta. Endeavour to make her father favourable to you.

Eraſtus. But if he rejeſt me, ſhould I ——

Marinetta. The worſt come to the worſt, we'll employ all ſorts of endeavours for you: one way or other ſhe muſt be yours: uſe your might, and we'll uſe ours.

Eraſtus. Farewel, we ſhall know the ſucceſs of it to-day.

[Reads the letter again to himſelf.]

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Matinetta to Gros-Renard.] And for us, what shall we say too of our amour? Thou dost not speak to me of it.

Gros-Renard. A wish'd for wedding, amongst such gentry as we, is a thing soon done. I'll have thee; wilt thou have me?

Marinetta. Gladly.

Gros-Renard. Shake hands, that's enough.

Marinetta. Farewel, Gros-Renard, my delight.

Gros-Renard. Farewel, my stay.

Marinetta. Adieu, fair firebrand of my flame.

Gros-Renard. Adieu, dear comet, rainbow of my soul.
[Exit Marinetta.] Heaven be prais'd, our affairs go well;
Albert's a man that will refuse you nothing.

Marinetta. Vallere is coming to us.

Gros-Renard. I pity the poor wretch, knowing what has pass'd.

SCENE III.

VALERE, ERASTUS, GROS-RENARD.

ERASTUS.

WELL, signior Valere?

Valere. Well, signior Erastus?

Erastus. How stands your amour?

Valere. How stands yours?

Erastus. Better and better every day.

Valere. So does mine.

Erastus. For Lucilia?

Valere. For her.

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Erastus. Certainly, I must own that you are a pattern of uncommon constancy.

Valere. And your firmness ought to be a rare example to posterity.

Erastus. For my part, I'm little calculated for that austere kind of love which finds enough in bare looks to satisfy it, nor can I form fine sentiments enough to suffer ill treatment with constancy: in short, when I really love, I love to be belov'd again.

Valere. 'Tis very natural, and I'm of the same opinion: the most perfect object that I could be charm'd with, should never have my devoirs, if I was not belov'd by it.

Erastus. However Lucilia —

Valere. Lucilia in her heart, does every thing for my passion that I could wish her to do.

Erastus. You are easily contented then.

Valere. Not so easily as you may think.

Erastus. I may, however, without too much vanity believe that I'm in her favour.

Valere. And I know that I hold a very good place in't.

Erastus. Don't abuse yourself, but believe me.

Valere. Believe me, and don't let your too credulous eyes make a dupe of you.

Erastus. If I might dare to shew you a sure proof that her heart — No, your soul would be mov'd by it.

Valere. If I might dare to discover a secret to you — But, I should grieve you, and so will be discreet.

Erastus. Since you urge me so, and your presumption forces me to humble it against my desire; read that.

Valere, after having read it.] These are tender words.

Erastus. You know the hand.

Valere. Yes, Lucilia's.

Erastus. Well, this so certain hope —

Valere laughing, and going away.] Farewel, signior Erastus.

Gros-Renard. He's a fool, sure : whence comes it that he should have reason to laugh ?

Erastus. Faith, he surprizes me, and between us I can't guess what the duce of a mystery is hid under this.

Gros-Renard. Here comes his footman, I think.

Erastus. Yes, I see him appear ; let us play the counterfeit, to set him a talking of his master's amour.

S C E N E IV.

ERASTUS, MASCARIL, GROS-RENARD.

M A S C A R I L *aside.*

N O, I don't find any condition more unfortunate, than to have a young, and very amorous master.

Gros-Renard. Good-morrow t'ye.

Mascaril. Good-morrow.

Gros-Renard. Where tends Mascaril at this hour ? what does he ? comes he back ? goes he ? or stays he where he is ?

Mascaril. No, I'm not come back, for I have not been ; neither do I go, because I'm stop'd ; nor do I stay, for this very moment I intend to be gone.

Erastus. Softly, Mascaril, don't be so extremely rigid.

Mascaril. Hah ! servânt, Sir.

Erastus. You run away from us very hastily ; what, do I frighten you ?

Mascaril.

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Mascaril. I could not think of that, Sir, from your courtesy.

Eraustus. Shake hands ; we have no more cause for jealousy ; we'll become friends, and my flame, which I extinguish, leaves free room for your happy designs.

Mascaril. Would to heaven it were so !

Eraustus. Gros-Renard knows that I turn me elsewhere.

Gros-Renard. Certainly ; and I likewise give up Marinetta to thee.

Mascaril. Let us pass by that point ; our rivalry is not such a one as is like to come to a great extremity. But is it a thing for certain that your worship is disenamour'd, or is it raillery ?

Eraustus. I have learn'd that your master is but too fortunate in his amours, and I should be a fool to pretend any longer to the secret favours which that lady grants to him alone.

Mascaril. Troth, you please me with this news ; besides that I was a little afraid of you with regard to our designs, you wisely slip your neck out of the collar : you have done well to leave a place where you was only carcass'd out of mere grimace ; and I, knowing all that pass'd, have a thousand times bemoan'd the false hope you were fed with. 'Tis an offence to abuse a man of honour : but how the duce, after all, did you find out the trick ? for the mutual engagement of their troth had only Mrs. Night, myself, and two others for witnesses : and the chain, which yielded satisfaction to the passion of our lovers, is thought a very great secret to this very time.

Eraustus. How ! what say you ?

Mascaril. I say that I'm astonish'd, Sir, and can't

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guess who could have told you, that under this false colour, that deceiv'd all the world, and you too, their unequall'd passion had join'd them by a secret marriage.

Eraustus. You lye.

Mascaril. Sir, with all my heart.

Eraustus. You are a rascal.

Mascaril. Agreed.

Eraustus. And this impudence deserves a sound drubbing on the spot.

Mascaril. You have entire power.

Eraustus. Ah! Gros-Renard.

Gros-Renard. Sir.

Eraustus. I contradict a relation which I but too much fear. [To Mascaril.] Do you think to fly?

Mascaril. No, no.

Eraustus. What! Lucilia is wife to —

Mascaril. No, Sir, I was in jest.

Eraustus. Hey! was you in jest, scoundrel?

Mascaril. No, I was not in jest.

Eraustus. Is it true then?

Mascaril. No, no, I don't say that.

Eraustus. What do you say then?

Mascaril. Alas! I say nothing, for fear I should speak ill.

Eraustus. Certify me, if it be a true thing, or an imposture.

Mascaril. 'Tis what you please. I don't come here to dispute any thing with you.

Eraustus drawing his sword.] Will you tell me? here's something that will untie your tongue without more ado.

Mascaril. It will make some foolish speech again; be pleased rather, if you think fit, to give me quickly

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a few bastinadoes, and leave me to scamper off without murmuring.

Eraustus. Thou shalt suffer death, or I'll fetch the naked truth out of my mouth.

Mascaril. Alas! I will tell it then; but, perhaps, Sir; I shall make you uneasy.

Eraustus. Speak: but take great care of what you do; nothing shall be able to deliver thee from my just rage, if you speak but one word false in what you say.

Mascaril. I agree to't: break my legs, arms, do worse to me still, kill me, if I in the least impose upon you in any thing I have said.

Eraustus. This marriage is true then?

Mascaril. My tongue, in this case, made a gross mistake, as I plainly perceive; but in short, the business is just as I told you; and it was after five days of nocturnal visits, you serving all the while to cover their sport the better, that the day before yesterday they were joined by this knot: Lucilia ever since makes a less shew of the violent love she bears my master, and absolutely will have him impute every thing he shall see, and all she does in your favour, to the effect of her high prudence, that would prevent the discovery of their secrets. If in spite of my protestations you doubt my truth, Gros-Renard may come one night along with me, and I'll shew him as I stand centinel, that we have a free access to her in the dark.

Eraustus. Out of my sight, villain.

Mascaril. With a very good will, 'tis what I want. [Exit.

Eraustus. Well!

Gros-Renard. Well! Sir; we are both bit, if the other be true.

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Erastus. Ah! the odious rascal is but too much so. I see too much likelihood in all he said; and Valere's behaviour, at sight of this letter, shews plainly their acting in concert, and that this certainly serves for a sham to the passion which that ungrateful woman returns him.

S C E N E V.

ERASTUS, MARINETTA, GROS-RENARD.

M A R I N E T T A.

I COME to give you notice, that this evening my mistress permits you to see her in the garden.

Erastus. Darest thou to speak to me, thou double-hearted traitress? Go out of my sight, and tell thy mistress to trouble me no more with her letters, and that this is the way, gipsy, I use them.

[Tears the letter, and goes out.

Marinetta. Tell me, Gros-Renard.

Gros-Renard. Darest thou to speak to me again, iniquitous female? Deceitful crocodile! whose felonious heart is worse than a satrap, or a lestrigon. Go, go, carry an answer to your lovely mistress, and tell her, well and good, that for all her suppleness neither my master, nor I, are any longer fools, and that henceforth she and thee may go to the devil together.

Marinetta alone.] Poor Marinetta, art thou really awake? What devil are they possess'd with? What? to give such a reception to our obliging favours. How will this surprize the good people at home.

ACT II. SCENE I.

ASCANIUS, FROSINA.

FROSINA.

I AM a girl of secrecy, thank heaven, Ascanius.

Ascanius. But are we secure enough here for such a conversation? Let us take care that no-body surprize us, or over-hear the least passage.

Frosina. We should be much less secure in the house; here we may easily see on all sides, and may speak with all safety.

Ascanius. Alas! what pain is it to me to break silence!

Frosina. Hey-day! this must be an important secret then.

Ascanius. Too much so, since I even tell it you with regret, and which you should not know if I could hide it any longer.

Frosina. Fie, this is an affront to me, to scruple opening yourself to me, whom you have found of so reserved a disposition in all your concerns. Me who was nurs'd with you, and have kept secret things of so great importance to you! who know —

Ascanius. Yes, you know the secret reason which conceals from the eyes of the world my sex and family: you know that I'm in this house, where I have pass'd my infancy, in order to preserve the inheritance which would have devolv'd to others at the death of young Ascanius, whose fate is reviv'd by this disguise of mine, and for this reason I dare to open my heart to

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you with more confidence. But before we go upon this conversation, Frosina, clear up a doubt that I continually fall into: can it be possible that Alberto should know nothing of the mystery which thus disguises my sex, and makes him my father?

Frosina. In good troth, the point you press me upon is a business which sufficiently puzzles me too: the bottom of this affair is a secret to me, nor could my mother give me any light into the matter. When this son died, who was so much belov'd, and who had great legacies left him, even before he came to light, by the will of a careful uncle, who wallow'd in wealth; his mother made a secret of his death, fearing that her husband, who was absent at that time, would have run mad to have seen the great inheritance, from which his family reap'd so much advantage, devolve to another. I say, to hide this accident, it was thought proper to take you into our family, where you was nurs'd up; your mother agreed to this cheat, which fill'd up the place of this son again; and secrecy was promis'd for a few presents. Alberto has never known it from us, and as for his wife, having kept it in her breast for more than twelve years, and the illness she died of being sudden, her unexpected death hinder'd any thing from being discovered by her: but notwithstanding, I perceive that he holds intelligence with your real mother. I know too that in private he does her some kindness, and perhaps he does not do this for nothing. On the other hand he would bring you to marry, and as he intends the match, 'tis a puzzling story, unless he knows the imposture without knowing your sex. But this digression has insensibly carried us too far out of the way, let us return to the secret, which I'm impatient to hear.

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Ascanius. Know then, that Cupid can't be deceiv'd, that my sex has not been able to disguise itself from his eyes, and that his subtle shafts have, under the habit that I wear, reach'd the heart of a weak woman : in short I'm in love.

Frosina. In love !

Ascanius. Soft, Frosina ; don't be quite astonish'd ; 'tis not time yet : for this wounded heart has something else to tell you, that will truly surprize you.

Frosina. What's that ?

Ascanius. I'm in love with Valere.

Frosina. Ha ! you are in the right, to love one from whose family your imposture takes a great inheritance, and who, if he had the least notice of your sex, would presently regain it : this is still a greater subject of astonishment.

Ascanius. I have something to surprize you still more with : I am his wife.

Frosina. O heavens ! his wife ?

Ascanius. Yes, his wife.

Frosina. Ha ! this outdoes all indeed, and is beyond all my reason.

Ascanius. This is not all yet.

Frosina. Not yet !

Ascanius. I am his wife, I say, without his knowing it, nor has he the least knowlege of what I am.

Frosina. Hoy, go on, I have done, and will reason no more about it, my senses are confounded at every word. I can't comprehend any thing of these riddles.

Ascanius. I'll explain them to you, if you will but hear me. Valere, bound in my sister's chains, appeared to me a lover worthy to be hearken'd to : I could not bear to see his passion rejected, without being a little in-

terested for him at heart: I would have had Lucilia taken pleasure in his conversation, I blam'd her severity, and blam'd it so effectually, that I myself, without being able to help it, enter'd into all those sentiments which she could not entertain: 'twas in talking to her that he persuaded me, suffering myself to be overcome by those sighs which he threw away; and those vows of his which were rejected by the object he was enamour'd with, were like conquerors receiv'd into my breast. Thus, Frosina, my too weak heart, alas! yielded to services that were not paid to it; receiv'd a wound by a rebounded stroke, and with mighty usury paid another's debt. At last, my dear, at last the love I had for him, forc'd me to declare myself, but under the name of another, and this too amiable lover thought he had found in me, one night, Lucilia favourable to his vows, and I manag'd that conversation so well, that he found out nothing of the disguise. Under this deceitful veil, which flatter'd his imagination, I told him, that my heart was enamour'd with him, but that finding my father was of another opinion, I ow'd a seeming compliance to his commands; that therefore we must make a secret of our love, with which the night should be only acquainted, and that all private conversation must be avoided by us in the day time, for fear of doing any mischief. That he should look on me then with the same indifference that he did before we had any intelligence together; and that on his part, as well as mine, nothing should be discovered either by gesture, word, or writing. In short, without dwelling upon all the industry with which I conducted the thread of this deceit, I have driven this bold project to a head, and have secur'd myself the husband I told you.

Frosina. So, so, what great talents you are mistress of! Would one think it of her with that cold mien? However, you have been pretty hasty here; for though I grant that the thing has succeeded hitherto, don't you think fit to regard the issue of it which can't long avoid being known?

Ascanius. When love is strong, nothing can stop it, it's own projects can alone satisfy it, and provided it arrives at the mark it proposes, it looks upon every thing afterwards as a mere trifle. But in short, I now discover myself to you, that your counsel — But here comes my husband.

SCENE II.

VALERE, ASCANIUS, FROSINA.

VALERE.

IF you are in any conference, which my presence is injurious to, I'll retire.

Ascanius. No, no, you may very well break off our conversation, since you was the cause of it.

Valere. I?

Ascanius. You yourself.

Valere. How so?

Ascanius. I was saying, that if I had been a woman, Valere would have been too well able to please me; and if I were the object of all his vows, I should not long delay to make him happy.

Valere. These protestations don't cost much, since there is such an obstacle to their effect; but you'd be

finely caught if some accident should put this tender compliment to the proof.

Afcanius. Not at all: I tell you that if I reign'd in your heart, I would very willingly crown your passion.

Valere. And what if it were one with whom, by your assistance, you might contribute to my happiness?

Afcanius. I could very ill answer your request.

Valere. This confession is not mighty obliging.

Afcanius. What, Valere? if I were a woman, and lov'd you tenderly, would you unjustly go to engage my promise to assist your passion for another mistress? Such a painful task would not do for me.

Valere. But that not being the thing —

Afcanius. What I have said to you, I have said as a woman, and you ought to take it so.

Valere. So then I must not at all pretend to the goodwill you have for me, Afcanius, unless heaven works in you a great miracle; that is, if you are not a woman, farewell to your affection; there's nothing else can make you interest yourself for me.

Afcanius. I am of a more delicate temper than you can imagine, and the least scruple offends me; when love's in the case I am always sincere; I'll not engage to serve you, Valere, if you don't at least absolutely assure me that you have the same sentiments for me, that you are transported with a like warmth of friendship, and that if I were a woman, no stronger passion should get the better of that by which I liv'd for you.

Valere. I never met with such a jealous scruple; but, as new as it is, the affection is obliging to me, and I here promise you whatever you demand.

Afcanius. But without deceit?

Valere. Yes, without deceit.

Ascanius. If 'tis true, henceforth I promise you, your interests shall be mine.

Valere. I have an important mystery to tell you by and by, in which the effect of those words will be necessary to me.

Ascanius. And I have likewise a secret to discover to you, wherein your affection for me may shew itself.

Valere. Heyday! how can that be?

Ascanius. The thing is, that I have a love-affair which I dare not reveal, and you have power enough over the object of my passion to be able to make my lot happy.

Valere. Explain yourself, Ascanius, and be assured beforehand that your happiness is certain, if 'tis in my power.

Ascanius. You promise here more than you imagine.

Valere. No, no; tell me the person for whom you employ me.

Ascanius. 'Tis not yet a proper time; but 'tis one that's nearly related to you.

Valere. Your discourse amazes me: pray heaven my sister —

Ascanius. This is not a proper time to explain myself, I tell you

Valere. Why so?

Ascanius. For a reason. You shall know my secret when I know yours.

Valere. I must have another's leave for that.

Ascanius. Get it then, and when we unfold our passions, we shall see which of the two will keep their word best.

Valere. Adieu, I am content with that

Ascanius. And I am content, Valere. [Exit Valere.]

Frosina. He thinks to find in you the assistance of a brother.

S C E N E III.

LUCILIA, ASCANIUS, FROSINA,
MARINETTA.

LUCILIA to Marinetta.

'TIS done; thus I may revenge myself; and if this action be sufficient to torment him, 'tis all the pleasure my heart could propose. — Brother, you perceive a change here; I am now resolved, after so much ill usage, to encourage Valere, and my love turns on that side at present.

Ascanius. What do you say, sister? how! will you become changeable? This inconstancy seems to me very strange.

Lucilia. Yours surprizes me with more reason; Valere was the object of your good services once: I have known you accuse me, on his account, of caprice, blind cruelty, pride, and injustice; and now when I resolve to love him, my intention displeases you, and I find you speaking against his interest.

Ascanius. I leave his, sister, to embrace yours; I know that he is list'd under the command of another, and it would be a dishonour to your charms if you call him back, and he does not come.

Lucilia. If that's all, I'll take care of my honour; I know what I'm to believe of his heart; he has very intelligibly laid it open to my sight; so you may discover my sentiments to him without any fear; or if you

refuse to do it, my own mouth shall let him know that I am touch'd with his passion. What! you stand thunderstruck, brother, at those words!

Ascanius. Oh! sister, if I have any power over you, if you are sensible to a brother's intreaties, quit any such design, and don't take away Valere from the love of a young creature whose interest is dear to me, and whom, upon my word, you ought to be concerned for; the poor wretch loves with violence; to me alone she discloses her flame, and I perceive in her heart such a tender affection as might subdue the greatest fierceness: yes, you would pity the condition of her mind, if you knew what stroke you threaten her passion with; and I so well feel the grief she would be in, that I'm certain, sister, she'd die of it, if you rob her of the lover who alone can give her pleasure. Erastus is a match that ought to satisfy you, and mutual fires —

Lucilia. Brother, enough: I don't know for whom you are concern'd; but pray let us give over this discourse, I beg of you, and leave me to consider a little.

Ascanius. Well, cruel sister! you'll leave me to despair if you effect the intentions which you have declared.

SCENE IV.

LUCILIA, MARINETTA.

MARINETTA.

YOUR resolution, Madam, is very hasty.

Lucilia. A heart weighs nothing when 'tis once affronted, it flies to it's revenge, and hastily lays hold of

whatever it thinks can serve it's resentment. The traitor! to shew this extreme insolence!

Marinetta. You see me yet quite besides myself with it; and though I ruminate upon it without any end, the adventure is out of my reach, and my Latin's lost upon it: for in short, never did heart open itself in a handsomer manner at the raptures of good news, for he was so transported with the kind letter that he no less than deify'd me; and yet at this other message, never was poor girl treated so scurvily. I can't imagine what could happen in such a few moments to occasion so great a change.

Lucilia. Nothing could happen which he could be in pain about, nor shall any thing secure him from my hatred. What! would you look for any secret reason for this affront but in his own baseness? Will the unfortunate letter, which I now accuse myself for, suffer the least excuse for his madness?

Marinetta. Why indeed, I find you are in the right, and that this quarrel is flat treachery. We are bit, madam; and yet we listen to those goodly hang-dogs who chant out wonders to us; who, to hook us in, feign so much languishing; we let our rigour melt to their fine words, and give up ourselves to their protestations, weak as we are: shame on our folly, and a plague take the men!

Lucilia. Well, well, let him boast, and laugh at our expence, he shall not have cause to triumph upon it long; for I'll let him see that, in a generous soul, contempt follows close on rejected kindness.

Marinetta. At least, in such a case, 'tis a great happiness to know that they have no advantage over us. Marinetta was in the right, whatever they may say of it,

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to suffer nothing one night when some people were in a very merry humour. Another, in hopes of matrimony, would have listned to the temptation; but *nescio vos*, quo' I.

Lucilia. What follies you talk of! and what an unseasonable time you have chose for such sallies! In short, I am sensibly touch'd at heart, and if ever that perfidious lover should, by good fortune, (which I am in the wrong, I think, at present to conceive any hope of, for heaven has taken too much pleasure in afflicting me to put it in my power to be reveng'd of him,) whenever, I say, by a propitious chance, he should return to offer me his life as a sacrifice, and at my feet to declare his detestation of this day's behaviour, I forbid thee above all things to speak to me for him; on the contrary, I would have you express your zeal by setting fully before me the greatness of his crime: and if my heart should be tempted by him ever to descend to any meanness, let your affection be then severe to me, and support my anger as it ought.

Marinetta. Oh! don't fear, leave that to us; I have at least as much passion as you, and I would rather be a maid all my life than that my fat rascal should give me any liking to him again — If he comes —

SCENE V.

MARINETTA, LUCILIA, ALBERTO

ALBERTO.

G O in again, Lucilia, and bid the tutor come to me; I would discourse him a little, and learn from him who

has the government of Ascanius, if he knows or not what uneasiness has lately attended him.

S C E N E VI.

A L B E R T O alone.

I N T O what a gulph of cares and perplexities does one unjust action cast us! My heart has long suffer'd a great deal of punishment for forging a son, through my too great avarice; and when I look on the mischiefs that I'm plung'd into, I heartily wish I had never thought on't. Sometimes I'm afraid of beholding my family cast into misery and shame by the cheat's being discover'd; sometimes I fear a hundred accidents that may happen to this son, whom it concerns me to preserve. If any business happens to call me abroad, I'm apprehensive of this sorrowful news at my return; so! don't you know it? have they told you of it? your son has a fever; or his leg or arm is broke. In short, every moment, be about what I will, a thousand troubles come into my head. Ah!

S C E N E VII.

A L B E R T O, M E T A P H R A S T U S.

M E T A P H R A S T U S.

MANDATUM tuum curo diligenter.

Alberto. Master, I want to—

Metaphrastus. Master is derived from *magister*; 'tis as though you should say three times greater.

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Alberto. May I die if I knew that; but in good time be it so. Master then —

Metaphrastus. Proceed.

Alberto. So I would proceed, but don't you proceed to interrupt me thus, Once more then, master, for the third time : my son gives me concern ; you know that I love him, and that I have always carefully brought him up.

Metaphrastus. 'Tis true : *Filio non potest praeferri nisi filius.*

Alberto. Master, in common discourse this jargon is not at all necessary, I think ; I believe you a great Latinist, and a sworn doctor ; I rely on those who assur'd me so : but in a conversation that I design to have with you, don't go to display all your learning, to play the pedant, and to sputter out a hundred words upon me, as if you were in a pulpit preaching. My father, though he had one of the best heads, never taught me any thing but my mass-book, which, though I have said it daily for fifty years, is still high Dutch to me. Have done therefore with your pompous learning, and adapt your language to my weak understanding.

Metaphrastus. Be it so.

Alberto. To come to my son then. Matrimony seems to frighten him, and whatever match I found his heart upon, he is cold to it, and draws back.

Metaphrastus. Perhaps he may be of the humour of Mark Tully's brother, of which he discours'd to Atticus, and which the Geecks call *Atanatos*.

Alberto. For heaven's sake, thou eternal school-master, I beg of ye to have done with the Greeks, the Albanians and Esclavonians, and all the other nations

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you want to talk of; they and my son have nothing to do together.

Metaphrastus. Well then, your son?

Alberto. I don't know if he has not some secret flame in his breast; something troubles him, or I'm much deceiv'd; and I perceiv'd him yesterday, without his seeing me, in a corner of a wood where no creature ever goes —

Metaphrastus. In the recess of a wood you mean, a recluse place, *Latine, secessus*; Virgil says, *est in secessu locus* —

Alberto. How the devil could Virgil say that, since I'm certain that in that secret place there was not one soul in the world but us two.

Metaphrastus. Virgil was mention'd as a famous author of a more chosen term than the word you us'd, and not as a witness of what you saw yesterday.

Alberto. I tell you that I neither want a more chosen term, author, or witness, and that my own testimony is here sufficient.

Metaphrastus. However you ought to chuse the words which are us'd by the best authors; *tu vivendo bonos*, as the saying is, *scribendo, sequere peritos*.

Alberto. Good man, or rather devil, wilt thou hear me without disputing.

Metaphrastus. That's Quintilian's precept.

Alberto. Plague take the babbler!

Metaphrastus. And thereupon he says a very learned thing, which you would most assuredly be glad to hear.

Alberto. The duce take thee for a puppy! Oh! how strangely am I tempted to apply something to those chops!

Metaphrastus. But, Sir, what's the occasion of your being inflam'd thus? what would you have of me?

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Alberto. I have told you twenty times that I would have you hear me when I speak.

Metaphrastus. Oh! undoubtedly, you shall be satisfied if that's all; I am silent.

Alberto. You do wisely.

Metaphrastus. I am ready to hear you.

Alberto. So much the better.

Metaphrastus. May I die if I say another word.

Alberto. Heaven grant that.

Metaphrastus. You shan't accuse me of talkativeness henceforth.

Alberto. Be it so.

Metaphrastus. Speak when you will.

Alberto. I'm going to do it.

Metaphrastus. And don't apprehend any more interruption from us.

Alberto. That's enough.

Metaphrastus. I am more punctual than any one.

Alberto. I believe so.

Metaphrastus. I have promis'd to say nothing.

Alberto. 'Tis sufficient.

Metaphrastus. From this moment I'm dumb.

Alberto. Very well.

Metaphrastus. Speak; come on: I'll give you a hearing at least; don't complain of my want of silence again; I won't so much as open my mouth.

Alberto aside.] Traitor!

Metaphrastus. But pray finish quickly; since I hear a long time, it is very reasonable that I speak in my turn.

Alberto. Detestable blockhead!

Metaphrastus. Hey! good lack! would you have me hear always? Let me partake of speaking, or I'll be gone.

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Alberto. My patience is really ——

Metaphrastus. What, will you proceed? not done yet? *per Jovem*, I'm cloy'd.

Alberto. I have not spoke a ——

Metaphrastus. Again? good heavens! what an harangue! can nothing stop the current of it?

Alberto aside.] I am mad.

Metaphrastus. Still? O what a strange torture! hey! let me speak a little, I conjure you; a fool that says nothing does not distinguish himself from a wise man that holds his peace.

Alberto, S'death! I'll make thee hold thine.

SCENE VIII.

METAPHRASTUS alone.

FROM thence comes very properly that sentence of the philosopher: "Speak, that I may know thee." Therefore if the power of speaking is taken from me, for my part I would chuse to lose my humanity too, and change my essence for that of a beast. I shall have the head-ach these eight days. Oh how I detest great talkers! But what? if learned men are not heard, if people would have their mouths always clos'd, the order of every thing must then be overturn'd; the chickens in a little time will devour the fox; young children remonstrate to old men; the lambs take pleasure in pursuing the wolf; the fool make laws; women fight; judges be try'd by the criminals; and masters whipt by the scholars; the sick man prescribe physick to the sound; the timorous hare ——

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SCENE IX.

ALBERTO, METAPHRASTUS.

[Alberto rings a bell in the ears of Metaphrastus, and drives him off.]

METAPHRASTUS.

MERCY on me! Help, help!

ACT III. SCENE I.

MASCARIL.

HEAVEN sometimes helps on a rash design, and we must get out of a scurvy affair as well as we can: as for me, who have imprudently talk'd too much, the readiest remedy I could have recourse to was to push my point, and immediately tell our old patron the whole intrigue. His son, that perplexes me, is a giddy-brain'd mortal. The other devil, by telling what I discover'd to him, has made a rent in our jacket: however, before his fury can be kindled, something fortunate may happen for us, and the old men may agree amongst themselves. This is what I'm going to attempt, and without losing a moment must, by my master's order, find out Alberto.

[Knocks at Alberto's door.]

SCENE II.

ALBERTO, MASCARIL.

ALBERTO.

WHO knocks!

Mascaril. A friend.

Alberto. Hey-day, what could bring thee hither.
Mascaril?

Mascaril. I come, Sir, to bid you good-morrow.

Alberto. Hah! truly you take a great deal of pains.
Good-morrow then, with all my heart. [Going.Mascaril. The reply is quick! What a blunt man
'tis? [Knocks.

Alberto. Again.

Mascaril. You have not heard me, Sir —

Alberto. Did'st not thou bid me good-morrow?

Mascaril. Yes.

Alberto. Well, good-morrow, I say.

[Going, Mascaril stops him.

Mascaril. Yes; but I come likewise to salute you in
the name of signior Polidor.Alberto. Oh! that's another thing. Has thy master
order'd thee to make his compliments to me?

Mascaril. Yes.

Alberto. I am oblig'd to him; go, I wish him all
happiness. [Goes out.Mascaril. This man is an enemy to ceremony.
[Knocks.] I have not finish'd his compliment, Sir, he
would desire one thing of you instantly.Alberto. Well, whenever he pleases, I am at his
service.

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Mascaril stopping him.] Stay, and let me make an end in two words. He desires to talk with you a moment about an important affair, and he'll come hither.

Alberto. Hey? what affair can it be that makes him desire to talk with me?

Mascaril. A great secret, I tell you, which he has this moment discover'd, and which, certainly, greatly concerns you both. This is my message.

SCENE III.

A L B E R T O alone.

O JUST heavens! how I tremble; for in short we have little acquaintance together. Some tempest is going to overturn my designs, and this secret is certainly that which I fear. The hope of interest has made some-body unfaithful to me, and so there's an eternal blot upon my honour; my cheat is discover'd. O how difficult it is to keep the truth long conceal'd! How much better had it been for me, and my reputation, to have follow'd the instigations of a just fear, by which I have been twenty times tempted to give up to Polidor an estate which I owe him, to prevent the clamour this stroke will expose me to, and cause every thing to pass in silence! But, alas! 'tis over, there's no longer an opportunity, and this wealth which came into my family by fraud, won't be taken out of it, without carrying away the best part of mine along with it.

SCENE IV.

POLIDOR, ALBERTO.

POLIDOR not seeing Alberto.

TO be thus marry'd without one's knowing any thing of it! Can this action end well? I know not what to think on't, and I much fear the great wealth and just anger of the father — But I see him there alone.

Alberto. O heavens! here comes Polidor.

Polidor. I tremble to accost him,

Alberto. Fear keeps me back.

Polidor. How shall I begin?

Alberto. What shall I say?

Polidor. He's in a great passion.

Alberto. He changes colour.

Polidor. I see, signior Alberto, by the trouble that appears in your eyes, that you know already what brings me to this place.

Alberto. Alas! yes.

Polidor. You might well be surpriz'd at the news, and I could scarce believe what I just now heard.

Alberto. I ought to blush with shame and confusion.

Polidor. I think such an action culpable, and don't pretend to excuse the guilty.

Alberto. Heaven pities a miserable sinner.

Polidor. That's what ought to be consider'd by you.

Alberto. One should be Christian like.

Polidor. That's most certain.

Alberto. Mercy, for heaven's sake, mercy, signior Polidor!

Polidor.

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Polidor. 'Tis I who now implore it of you.

Alberto. In order to obtain it, I cast myself at your feet.

Polidor. I ought rather to be in that posture than you.

Alberto. Have some pity on my misfortune.

Polidor. After such an injury I am the suppliant.

Alberto. You break my heart with this goodness.

Polidor. You confound me with so much humility.

Alberto. Once more pardon.

Polidor. Alas! do you pardon.

Alberto. I'm under a great deal of grief for this action.

Polidor. And I am touch'd to the last degree by the same.

Alberto. I presume to conjure you not to let it be made public.

Polidor. Alas, signior Alberto! I wish nothing else.

Alberto. Let us preserve my honour.

Polidor. Oh! yes, I'm dispos'd to do't.

Alberto. As to the money you must have, you yourself shall determine it.

Polidor. I would have no more of your money but what you please yourself: of all those concerns I'll make you master, and I'm above measure content if you can be so.

Alberto. Ha! what a God-like man! what excess of sweetness!

Polidor. What sweetness in yourself after such a misfortune!

Alberto. May you have all things prove prosperous.

Polidor. May heaven preserve you.

Alberto. Let us embrace like brothers.

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Polidor. I consent to't, with all my heart, and am much rejoiced that all's ended in a happy agreement.

Alberto. I thank heaven for't.

Polidor. Pray don't counterfeit any thing, your resentment gives me room to fear; Lucilia having committed a fault with my son, and as you are powerful both in wealth and friends——

Alberto. Hey! what do you talk of faults, and Lucilia?

Polidor. Enough, let us not begin a useless discourse. I own my son is greatly to blame in the affair, nay, if that will be any ease to you, I'll own that he alone is in fault; that your daughter had too refin'd a virtue to have ever made this dishonourable step, without the instigation of a wicked seducer: that the traitor has betray'd her innocent modesty, and thus destroyed the expectation of your conduct. But since the thing is done, and according to my wishes, a spirit of good-nature has join'd us in agreement, let us have nothing of it over-again, but repair the offence by the solemnity of a happy alliance.

Alberto aside.] Oh heavens! what a mistake is this! what do I hear? I fall here from one trouble into another as great. In these different transports I know not what to answer, and if I speak a word, I'm afraid of confounding myself.

Polidor. What are you thinking of, signior Alberto?

Alberto. Nothing. Let us defer, pray, our conference for a while: a sudden illness seizes me, which obliges me to leave you.

SCENE V.

P O L I D O R alone.

I CAN look into his soul, and read what disturbs him, and though his reason guided him at first, his displeasure is not yet quite appeas'd. The image of the affront returns to him, and he endeavour'd, by leaving me, to disguise the trouble he was tortur'd with. I take part in his confusion, and his grief touches me. A little time must settle his mind : sorrow too much restrained easily redoubles. O here's my young fool, who gives us all this trouble.

SCENE VI.

P O L I D O R, V A L E R E.

P O L I D O R.

I N short, young spark, your fine behaviour grieves your poor old father every moment : you act new wonders every day, and we never hear of any thing else.

Valere. What do I act every day, that's so very criminal ? By what do I so much merit a father's displeasure ?

Polidor. I am a strange man, and of a terrible humour, to accuse so wise and peaceable a child. Why, he lives like a saint ; and is in the house at prayers from morning to evening. To say that he perverts the order of nature, and turns day into night, O ! 'tis a

grand deceit ! That he neither regards father or kindred, upon twenty occasions ; horrible falsity ! That he was very lately match'd to the daughter of Alberto, by a stol'n wedding, without fearing the mighty disorder that would follow : they take him for another, sure ! The poor innocent creature does not so much as know what I mean ! Oh ! thou rascal, whom heaven has sent me for my punishment, wilt thou always follow thy own imaginations ? and shall I never see thee do one wise action before my death ? *[Exit.]*

Valere alone, musing.] From whence can this stroke proceed ? my perplex'd mind can find none to imagine it of, but Mascaril : but he'll ne'er confess it to me ; I must make use of some address, and curb myself a little in my just passion.

S C E N E VII.

V A L E R E, M A S C A R I L.

V A L E R E.

MASCARIL, my father, whom I just now saw, knows all our affair.

Mascaril. Does he know it ?

Valere. Yes.

Mascaril. How the duce could he know it ?

Valere. I don't know one on whom to fix my conjecture ; but in short, the business has had such success, that I have all the reason in the world to be transported : he has not said a cross word to me upon't ; he excuses my fault, and approves my flame, and I should be glad to know who could be capable of making him so

very tractable. I can't express to thee the satisfaction it gives me.

Mascaril. And what would you say to me, Sir, if it was I who had procur'd this good fortune for you?

Valere. Good, good, you would procure yourself one by it, I see.

Mascaril. 'Tis I, I tell you, I, that your father knows it from; and who have produc'd this favourable consequence for you.

Valere. But is it so, without a jest?

Mascaril. The duce take me if I jest, and if it is not thus.

Valere drawing his sword.] And may he take me, if thou does not this moment receive the just reward for it.

Mascaril. Hah! what now, Sir? I bar surprise.

Valere. Is this the fidelity you promis'd me? Without my counterfeiting, you would never have own'd the trick, which I justly imagin'd you had play'd me, Thou rascal, whose tongue has been too able to provoke my father against me, and utterly ruin me; thou shalt die without saying another word.

Mascaril. Hold, my soul is not in a good condition for death. Pray now stay, and see the success this adventure will have. I had good reasons which made me reveal a marriage, which you yourself could scarce conceal: 'twas a piece of policy, and you'll find that the issue will condemn the fury you are in. Why should you vex yourself, if your desires are fully satisfy'd through my care, and an end be put to the constraint you were under?

Valere. And what if all this talk of thine is nothing but flames?

Mascaril. Why then you'll have time enough to kill

me. But in short, my projects may prove effectual; heaven will do for it's own, and you'll be content in the end, and thank me for my good conduct.

Valere. Well, we shall see. But Lucilia —

Mascaril. Hold, here comes her father.

SCÈNE VIII.

ALBERTO, VALERE, MASCARIL.

ALBERTO not seeing Valere.

THE more I recover from the perplexity I was in at first, the more I find myself disturb'd at this strange story, which gave such a dangerous change to my fear; for Lucilia maintains that 'tis all a jest, and has talk'd to me in a manner that has taken away all suspicion. — Ha! Sir, is it you whose notorious boldness makes a jest of my honour, and invents this base story?

Mascaril. Pray, signior Alberto, make use of a little more gentle tone, and don't be so angry with your son-in-law.

Alberto. How! son-in-law, rascal? you look as if you mov'd the springs of this machine, and were the first inventor of it.

Mascaril. I see nothing here to put you in a passion.

Alberto. Do you think it right, pray, to defame my daughter, and to bring such a scandal on a whole family?

Mascaril. He's ready to do your will in every thing.

Alberto. What would I have him do but tell the truth? If he had any inclination for Lucilia, his pursuit of her should have been honourable and handsome; he should have apply'd to her on the side of duty,

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and should have ask'd her father's leave, and not have had recourse to this base contrivance, which gives such a sensible stroke to modesty.

Mascaril. What! is not Lucilia under secret ties to my master?

Alberto. No; rascal, nor ever shall be so.

Mascaril. Softly; if 'tis true that this thing is done, will you approve of that secret chain?

Alberto. And if it is certain that it is not so, wilt thou have thy bones broke?

Valere. 'Tis easy, Sir, to make it appear to you that he says true.

Alberto. Good, there's another, a worthy master of such a man. O what impudent liars!

Mascaril. As I am a man of honour, 'tis so as I say.

Valere. What could be our aim in making you believe it?

Alberto aside.] They understand one another like pick-pockets in a fair.

Mascaril. But let us come to the proof, and without quarrelling, call out Lucilia and let her speak.

Alberto. And what if she contradicts you?

Mascaril. She'll not do it, Sir, I assure you. Promise but your consent to their love, and I'll expose myself to the severest punishment if she does not with her own mouth confess to you, both the faith she has engaged, and the ardour that urges her.

Alberto. We must see this business out.

[Goes to knock at his door.

Mascaril to Valere.] Come, all will go well.

Alberto. Ho! Lucilia! a word with you.

Valere to Mascaril.] I fear ———

Mascaril. Fear nothing.

S C E N E IX.

LUCILIA, ALBERTO, VALERE, MASCARIL.

M A S C A R I L.

SIGNIOR Alberto, be silent at least. In short, madam, every thing conspires to your heart's happiness, and your father being inform'd of your love, leaves you your husband, and confirms your vows; provided, that banishing all frivolous fears, a word of acknowledgement from you confirms what we say.

Lucilia. What does this confident rascal say to me?

Mascaril. Good, I'm already honour'd with a fine title.

Lucilia. Let us know a little, Sir, what fine frolic was the cause of this gallant story that has been spread about to-day.

Valere. Pardon me, charming creature; but my servant has been babbling, and I find our marriage is discover'd against my will.

Lucilia. Our marriage!

Valere. 'Tis all known, adorable Lucilia, and to endeavour to disguise it is all in vain.

Lucilia. What! the ardour of my passion has made you my husband, has it?

Valere. 'Tis a happiness which ought to make a thousand jealous: but I impute this success of my love much less to the ardour of your passion, than to the goodness of your soul. I know that you have reason to be angry; that it was a secret you would have hid, and I myself have restrained the violence of my transports,

that I might not violate your express prohibition ; but —

Mascaril. Well, yes, 'twas I ; a great mischief indeed.

Lucilia. Was there ever an imposture equal to this ? Dare you maintain it in my very presence, and think to obtain me by this fine stratagem ? O the pleasant lover ! whose gallant passion would wound my honour because it could not gain my heart, and would move my father, by the strength of a foolish story, to marry me by way of reward to one who loads me with disgrace. Though even every thing contributed to your passion, my father, destiny, and my own inclination, I'd sooner see the light no more than be join'd to one that thought to obtain me in this manner. Be gone, for if my sex could with decency break out into violence, I would make you know what it was to treat me thus.

Valere to Mascaril.] 'Tis over with us, her anger can't be pleas'd.

Mascaril. Let me speak to her. Hark'e, madam, to what good pray is all this grimace now ? what's your meaning ? and what capricious transport makes you thus obstinate against your own wishes ? If your father was a passionate man, good ; but he suffers reason to govern him, and he himself told me that a confession would gain his affection for you. I believe indeed you feel some little shame to make a free acknowledgement of the love that you have yielded to ; but if it has lost you a little liberty, all's adjusted again by a good marriage ; and though they may reproach the flame that consumes you, the mischief is not so great as if you had murder'd a man. People know that flesh is frail sometimes, and that a

maid is neither stock nor stone. You were not the first, that's certain, and won't be the last, I dare believe.

Lucilia. What! can you hear this insolent talk, and not say a word to these indignities?

Alberto. What would you have me say? This affair puts me quite beside myself.

Mascaril. I swear, madam, you ought to have confess'd all before now.

Lucilia. Confess'd what?

Mascaril. What? why what has pass'd between my master and you; a fine jest indeed!

Lucilia. And what has pass'd, audacious monster, between your master and I?

Mascaril. You ought, I think, to know a little more news of that than I; and this night was too sweet a one to you, for one to believe you could lose all memory of it so soon.

Lucilia. This is bearing too much, father, from an impudent footman. [Gives him a box on the ear.

SCENE X.

ALBERTO, VALERE, MASCARIL.

MASCARIL.

I THINK she gave me a box on the ear.

Alberto. Be gone, rascal, villain; her hand has done an action upon thee which her father praises her for.

Mascaril. And notwithstanding that, may the devil take me this instant if I have said any thing but what's most sure.

Alberto. And notwithstanding that, may I lose an ear if you carry on this impudence much further!

Mascaril. Shall I bring two witnesses to justify me?

Alberto. Shall I bring two of my servants to cudgel you?

Mascaril. Their report ought to make mine credible.

Alberto. Their arms may make up for the impotence of mine.

Mascaril. I tell you that Lucilia behaves thus out of bashfulness.

Alberto. I tell you that I'll have reason for all this.

Mascaril. Do you know Ormin the fat notable scrivener?

Alberto. Do you know Grimant the city executioner?

Mascaril. And Simon the tailor formerly so much follow'd?

Alberto. And the gibbet set up in the middle of the market?

Mascaril. You'll see this marriage confirm'd by them.

Alberto. You shall see your destiny finish'd by them.

Mascaril. It was those they took for witnesses of their troth.

Alberto. 'Tis these who shall shortly revenge me on thee.

Mascaril. And these eyes saw them interchange their promise.

Alberto. And these eyes shall see thee take a swing.

Mascaril. And, for a token, Lucilia had a black veil on.

Alberto. And, for a token, one may set it plainly in your forehead.

Mascaril. O! obstinate old man!

Alberto. O cursed rascal! you may thank my age, which makes me incapable of punishing the affront you have given me upon the spot; but thou shalt lose nothing of it but the waiting for it, I promise thee.

S C E N E XI.

V A L E R E, M A S C A R I L.

V A L E R E.

S O H! the fine success that you was to procure —

Mascaril. I understand, at half a word, what you mean; every one is arming against me; I see cudgels and gibbets preparing for me on every side: therefore that I may be at rest from this extreme disorder, I'll go and cast myself headlong from a rock, if in the despair with which my heart is incens'd, I can meet with one that is high enough to please me. Farewel, Sir.

Valere. No, no, your flight is in vain, if you do die, I expect it shall be in my sight.

Mascaril. I can't die when any body looks at me; and by that means my death would be delay'd.

Valere. Follow me, traitor, follow me; my inrag'd love will shew thee if 'tis a jesting matter.

Mascaril. Unhappy Mascaril! to what evils dost thou see thyself condemn'd to-day for another's trespass.

ACT IV. SCENE I.

ASCANIUS, FROSINA.

FROSINA.

IT is a vexatious accident.

Ascanius. Ah, my dear Frosina, fate has absolutely concluded my ruin : this affair, now 'tis come to the pitch it is, will certainly not stop there ; 'twill go through with it ; and Lucilia and Valere, surpriz'd at the novelty of such a mystery, will one day search into these obscurities, by which means all my projects will prove abortive. For, in short, whether Alberto has part in the stratagem, or he himself be deceiv'd with the rest of the world, if it ever happens that the discovery of my condition should put into the hand of others all the wealth he has engross'd in his own, judge you whether he'll have cause to endure my presence ; his interest being destroy'd, will leave me to my real birth : his tenderness is over, and whatever sentiment my lover might then have of my stratagem, would he own a girl for his wife, whom he would behold without the support either of family or fortune ?

Frosina. I think this is reasoning right ; but these reflections should have come sooner : who has hid this light from you till now ? There was no need of being a great conjurer, to see from the first moment of your design upon him, all that your genius never found out 'till to day. The action spoke it ; and since I have known it, I could never foresee any better issue it could have.

Afcanius. What muſt I do at laſt? my trouble cannot be equall'd; put yourſelf in my place, and give me advice.

Froſina. If I take your place, 'twill belong to you to give me advice upon this diſgrace: for now I am you, and you are me; counſel me, Froſina, in the condition I am in, what remedy to think of; tell me, I beg you.

Afcanius. Alas! don't treat it with raillery; 'tis taking but little part in my piercing ſorrow to laugh, when you ſee the terms I am on.

Froſina. Afcanius, I am very ſenſible of your ſorrow, and would do all I poſſibly could to bring you out of it: but what can I do after all? I ſee very little likelihood of turning this affair to the ſatisfaction of your love.

Afcanius. If nothing can help me, I muſt die.

Froſina. Lack-a-day, 'tis alway time enough for that; death's a remedy to be found whenever one pleaſes, and one ought to make uſe of it the lateſt one can.

Afcanius. No, no, Froſina, no; if your propitious counſel does not conduct my deſtiny amongſt theſe precipices, I abandon myſelf wholly to deſpair.

Froſina. Do you know my thought? I muſt go ſee there — But here comes Eraſtus, who may diſturb us: we may talk of this buſineſs as we walk; come let us retire.

SCENE II.

ERASTUS, GROS-RENNARD.

ERASTUS. *What now?*

AGAIN, repuls'd?

Gros-Rennard. Never was ambassador less hearken'd to: scarce had I endeavour'd to inform her that you desir'd a moment's conversation with her, but she answer'd haughtily, Go, go; I value him as much as I do thee; tell him he may walk off; and upon this fine speech turn'd her face from me, and went on: Mari-
netta too, with a disdainful phiz, and a *be gone, lubbardly foot-fellow*, left me planted there as her mistress did: so that your fortune and mine have nothing to reproach one another with.

Erastus. Ungrateful creature! to receive with so much haughtiness the speedy return of a heart justly provok'd! What! is the first transport of a passion, which had so much the appearance of being abus'd, unworthy of excuse? And ought my lively love to have been insensible in that fatal moment to the happiness of a rival? Would any other not have done the same thing in my place, or been less surpriz'd at so much boldness? Am I too late in leaving my just suspicions? I have not waited for protestations on her part; and though nobody can yet tell what to think of it, my impatient heart yields all it's glory to her; it endeavours to excuse her, and can she so little perceive the greatness of my passion through this profound respect? So far from confirming my soul, and furnishing it with arms against the alarms a rival tries to give it, the ungrateful wo-

man abandons me to my excessive jealousy, and refuses me all message, writing, or speech. Ah! an affection has certainly very little violence that's capable of remembering so small an offence; and this disgust, which is so ready to arm itself with rigour, sufficiently discovers to me the bottom of her heart, and what value now all that her caprice has flatter'd my passion with, ought to be to me. No, I intend to be no longer engaged to a heart where I perceive I have so little share; and since she shews such an extreme coldness whether she keeps one or not, I'll do the same.

Gros Renard. And so will I: let us both be angry, and put our love in the list of old sins; we must learn how to live with this wavering sex, and make them feel that we have some courage. He that will bear their contempt will be sure to have it; if we had the wit to set a value upon ourselves, the women would not be so very haughty: O how insolent are they through our fault! I would be hang'd if we should not see them cling about our necks more than we desired, if it was not for those servile submissions which most men, now-a-days, continually spoil them with.

Eraustus. For my part, contempt shocks me above any thing; and to punish hers, by one as great, I am resolv'd to cherish a new passion in my heart.

Gros-Renard. And I'll perplex myself no more about women; I renounce them all, and believe, in good troth, that you would do very well to do like me: for look, woman is, as one may say, master, a certain animal hard to be known, and whose nature is greatly inclined to mischief: and as an animal is always an animal, and will never be any thing but an animal, though it's life lasted for an hundred thousand years; so, with-

out raillery, a woman is always a woman, and will never be any thing but a woman, as long as the world shall endure. Whence it came that a certain Greek author says, that her head might pass for the moving sand: for pray mark well this reasoning, which is most weighty: for as the head is the chief of the body, and as the body without a chief is worse than a beast; if the chief has not a good arreement with the head, so that every thing is not well regulated by it's compass, we see certain confusions arise: the brutal part then endeavours to get rule over the sensitive, and we see one pull one way, the other another; one calls for soft, the other for hard; in short every thing goes it knows not how: this is to shew that here below, according to interpretation, the head of a woman is like a weathercock on the top of a house, which turns with the first wind; wherefore cousin Aristotle often compares her to the sea, whence it comes to pass that people say, that there is nothing in the world so unstable as the waves; or by comparison, for comparison makes us comprehend a reason distinctly, and we studious folks love a comparison much better than a similitude: by comparison then, if you please, master, as we see that the sea, when a storm rises, begins to foam, the wind blows and rages, billows against billows make a horrible confusion, and the ship in spite of the mariners teeth, goes sometimes down to the cellar, and sometimes up into the garret: so when she is fantastical in her head, one beholds a tempest in form of a violent storm, which will break out by certain — words, and then a — certain wind, which by — certain waves, in — a certain manner, like a heap of sand — when — In short woman is worse than the devil.

Erastus. Very well argued.

Gros-Renard. Pretty tolerable, thanks to my stars ; but I see them, Sir, coming this way. Stand firm, be sure.

Erastus. Don't be in any pain about it.

Gros-Renard. I am strangely afraid that her eyes will clinch your chain again.

SCENE III.

LUCILIA, ERASTUS, MARINETTA,
GROS-RENARD.

MARINETTA.

I SEE him there yet : but don't yield.

Lucilia. Don't you suspect me of weakness in this point.

Marinetta. He comes to us.

Erastus. No, no ; think not, madam, that I return again to talk to you of my passion ; it is all over ; I'm resolved to cure myself, and know very well how much my heart has possessed of yours. So constant an anger for the shadow of an offence has too plainly discovered your indifference to me, and I ought to shew you, that contempt is above all things touching to generous minds. I'll own that my eyes have observed in yours, charms which they never found in any others, and the rapture which my chains gave me, would have made me prefer them to proffered sceptres : yes, my love for you was undoubtedly extreme, I lived wholly in you ; and I'll even own that after all, perhaps, I shall still have difficulty enough to disengage myself, notwithstanding

the affront : it is possible, that notwithstanding the cure I am attempting, my heart may, for a long time, bleed with this wound, and that, freed from a yoke which was the cause of all my happiness, I shall resolve never to love again. But in short, it is no matter, and since your hatred drives away a heart as oft as love brings it back to you, this is the last importunity that you shall ever have from my rejected addresses.

Lucilia. You may make the favour complete, Sir, and spare me this last too.

Erastus. Well, madam, very well, you shall be satisfied : I here break off all acquaintance with you, and break it off for ever, since you will have it so ; and may I lose my life when I again desire to converse with you !

Lucilia. So much the better ; you'll oblige me.

Erastus. No, no, don't be afraid that I'll falsify my word ; had I a heart so weak as not to be able to efface your image, be assured that you shall never have the advantage to see me return.

Lucilia. It would be much in vain if you did.

Erastus. I would sheath my sword in my breast should I be ever guilty of such excessive meanness as to see you again after this unworthy treatment.

Lucilia. Be it so ; let's talk no more of it then.

Erastus. Yes, yes, let's talk no more on't ; and to cut off here all superfluous wrangling, and give you a certain proof, ungrateful woman, I'll for ever throw off your chain, I'll keep nothing which may renew an image which it is necessary for me to efface from my mind. There is your picture ; it presents to the eye a hundred bright charms which you are mistress of, but it conceals underneath them an hundred as monstrous

faults ; and in short, it is an imposture which I restore you.

Gros-Renard. Good.

Lucilia. And, to follow your design of returning every thing, there is the diamond which you forc'd me to take.

Marinetta. Very well.

Erastus. Here's likewise a bracelet of yours.

Lucilia. And this agate is yours, which you made me put in a seal.

Erastus reading.

" You love me with an extreme love, Erastus, and
" want to know my heart : if I don't love Erastus so
" much, - at least I love that Erastus should thus love
" me."

LUCILIA.

You assure me by this that you approve of my service ; it is a falsity worthy of this punishment.

[Tears the letter.

Lucilia reading.

" I'm ignorant of the destiny of my ardent love, and
" how long I shall suffer ; but this I know, beauteous
" charmer, that I shall always love you." ERASTUS.
This assures me of your love for ever ; both the hand
and the letter told a lye.

[Tears the letter.

Gros-Renard. Go on.

Erastus. This is yours ? enough — the same fortune.

Marinetta to Lucilia.] Be firm.

Lucilia. I should be sorry to spare one of them.

Gros-Renard to Erastus.] Don't have the last.

Marinetta. Hold out bravely to the end.

Lucilia. Well, there's the rest.

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Eraustus. And, thank heaven, here's all. May I be destroy'd, if I don't keep my word.

Lucilia. Confound me, heaven, if mine is frivolous.

Eraustus. Farewel then.

Lucilia. Farewel then.

Marinetta to Lucilia.] It goes well.

Gros-Renard to Eraustus.] You triumph.

Marinetta to Lucilia.] Come, remove out of his sight.

Gros-Renard to Eraustus.] Retire, after this bold stroke.

Marinetta to Lucilia.] What do you stay for now?

Gros-Renard to Eraustus.] What would you have more?

Eraustus. Ah! Lucilia, Lucilia! a heart like mine will regret this, and I know it well.

Lucilia. Ah! Eraustus, Eraustus! a heart like yours may be easily repair'd by another.

Eraustus. No, no, search every where, you will never find one so passionately fond of you; I assure you. I don't say this to move you; I should be in the wrong now to form any such desire; my most ardent respects were not able to oblige you, you had a mind to break with me; I must think of it no more: but no-body after me, whatever they may pretend, will ever have so tender a passion for you.

Lucilia. When one loves people, one treats them otherwise, one makes a better judgment of their person.

Eraustus. When one loves people, one may have one's mind seiz'd with jealousy upon strong appearances; but then when one loves them one can't in effect resolve to destroy them, and that you have done.

Lucilia. Pure jealousy is more respectful.

Erastus. We regard with a gentler eye an amorous offence.

Lucilia. No, your heart, Erastus, was not sincerely in love.

Erastus. No, Lucilia, you never lov'd me.

Lucilia. Oh! that torments you much, I suppose; it would have been far better, perhaps, for my life if I — But let us leave this superfluous talk; I don't say what my thoughts are upon it.

Erastus. Why?

Lucilia. Because we break off acquaintance with one another, and this is not a proper season I think for it.

Erastus. Do we break off acquaintance?

Lucilia. Yes, to be sure; why is it not done?

Erastus. And you see it with a satisfy'd mind.

Lucilia. Like you.

Erastus. Like me?

Lucilia. 'Tis certainly weakness to let people see that we are griev'd at the loss of them.

Erastus. But 'tis you, cruel woman, that would have it so.

Lucilia. I? not at all; 'tis you who had fully resolv'd upon't.

Erastus. I? I thought I had given you great pleasure in it.

Lucilia. No, you had a mind to give yourself satisfaction.

Erastus. But if my heart still desir'd it's poison again; if quite provok'd, as it is, it would beg pardon—

Lucilia. No, no, don't do it; my weakness is too great, I should be afraid I might too soon grant your request.

Erastus. Oh! you cannot too soon grant it me, nor

can I, upon that fear, too soon ask it. Consent to it, madam ; so pure a flame ought to remain immortal for your own sake. In short I ask it ; pray grant me this obliging pardon.

Lucilia. Lead me home.

SCENE IV.

MARINETTA, GROS-RENARD.

MARINETTA.

OH ! cowardly creature !

Gros-Renard. Oh ! weak courage !

Marinetta. I blush with indignation.

Gros-Renard. I swell with rage : don't imagine that I'll yield thus.

Marinetta. And don't you think to find such a dupe in me.

Gros-Renard. Come on, come on, and see the effects of my wrath.

Marinetta. You mistake us for another ; you have not to do with my silly mistress. Consume that fine phiz that's yet to make us in love with his hide ! Should I be in love with that puppy's face of thine ? I hunt after thee ! Faith, you shall squander away girls like us.

Gros-Renard. Ay, do you take it thus ? Here, here, there's your fine gallant point, and half-penny ribband without your seeking it in that manner : it shan't have the honour of being on my ear any more.

Marinetta. And to shew thee that I despise thee, there's

thy half-hundred of Paris-needles which thou gavest me yesterday with so much bragging.

Gros-Renard. And take thy knife too, a thing most rich and rare ; it cost thee six-pence when thou made me a present of it.

Marinetta. Take thy scissars with the brass chain.

Gros-Renard. I forgot the piece of cheese you gave me the day before yesterday, here ; I would I could bring up the broth you made me eat, that I might have nothing of yours.

Marinetta. I have none of thy letters about me now, but I'll throw every one of them into the fire.

Gros-Renard. And do you know what I shall do with yours ?

Marinetta. Take care you never come begging to me again.

Gros-Renard. To cut off every way of being reconcil'd, we must break a straw ; a straw broken concludes an affair between people of honour. None of your sheep's eyes ; I will be angry.

Marinetta. Don't ogle me ; I'm too much provok'd.

Gros-Renard. Here break ; this is the way of never recanting again ; break ; do you laugh, you jade !

Marinetta. Yes, you make me laugh.

Gros-Renard. Plague take your grin ! there's all my anger dulcify'd already : what say you to't ? Shall we break, or shall we not break ?

Marinetta. As you will.

Gros-Renard. As you will.

Marinetta. As you yourself will.

Gros-Renard. Can you consent never to have me love you ?

Marinetta. I ? what you please.

Gros-

Gros-Renard. What you yourself please. Say —

Marinetta. I'll say nothing.

Gros-Renard. Nor I neither.

Marinetta. Nor I.

Gros-Renard. Faith we had better given over this grimace; shake hands, I pardon you.

Marinetta. And I forgive you.

Gros-Renard. Bless me! how I'm bewitch'd to her charms!

Marinetta. What a fool is Marinetta when her Gros-Renard's in the case!

ACT V. SCENE I.

MASCARIL.

WHEN darkness reigns through all the town, I'll get into Lucilia's chamber, quoth my master: go quickly therefore and prepare the dark-lanthorn and necessary arms for by and by. When he said these words to me, I thought it sounded as if he had said, Go quickly and get a halter to hang thee with. But come on, master; for in the astonishment which such an order threw me into at first, I had not time to be able to answer you: but I'll talk with you now, and confound you too; therefore defend yourself well, and let us reason without noise: would you, d'ye say, go and see Lucilia to-night? Yes, Mascaril. And what d'ye think to do? The action of a lover who would be satisfy'd. The action of a man who has very little brains to go and risque his hide without any occasion. But do you know what motive induces me to this design? Lucilia is anger'd. Well, so much the worse for her. But

love will have me to grasp her. But Love is a fool, and don't know what he says. Will this love, pray, guard us from an enrag'd rival; or father, or brother? Dost thou think any of them intend to do us mischief? Yes, indeed, I do think so; and especially this rival. Whatever happens, Mascari!, what I trust to is, that we shall go well arm'd, and if any body quarrels with us we must have a skirmish. Ay, but that's what your footman does not in the least pretend to: I skirmish! Lord! am I a Roland, master, or some Ferragus. You know me little. When I consider, I who am so dear to myself, that two fingers breadth of cold iron in this body would be enough to send a poor mortal to his grave; I am disgusted with this strange method; but thou shalt be arm'd cap-a-pe. So much the worse, I shall be less nimble to get into the wood; and besides, there's no armour so well join'd, which a villanous point may not slip into. Oh! at this rate thou'lt be posted for a coward. With all my heart, provided I can but always move my chain. At table you may count me for four, if you will; but you must count me for nothing, when fighting's in the case: in short, if the other world has charms for you; for my part I think the air of this very sweet: I am not very hungry after death or wounds, and you shall play the fool alone, I assure you.

SCENE II.

VALERE, MASCARIL.

VALERE.

I NEVER had a more uneasy day: the sun seems to have forgot himself, and he has such a course to run

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yet, before he reaches his bed, that I believe he'll ne'er accomplish it : his slowness makes me mad.

Mascaril. And this eagerness is to go in the dark, to run a groping after some ugly incumbrance — You see Lucilia is obstinate in her repulses —

Valere. Make no superfluous harangues to me now : were I sure to meet with a hundred deadly ambuscades, yet I feel such cruel torment from her anger, that I'll either appease it, or end my fate : 'tis a thing resolved on.

Mascaril. I approve this transport ; but the mischief is, Sir, that we must get in secretly.

Valere. Very well.

Mascaril. And I am afraid I shall do you some hurt.

Valere. How so ?

Mascaril. I'm tormented to death with a cough, the impertinent noise of which will occasion your being discover'd : every moment — [Coughs.] You see what a punishment 'tis.

Valere. This distemper will go off, take but some juice of liquorish.

Mascaril. I don't think 'twill go off, Sir. I should be overjoy'd to go along with you, but I should be morally griev'd, if I should be the cause of any misfortune's happening to my dear master.

SCENE III.

VALERE, RAPIERE, MASCARIL.

RAPIERE.

SIR, I was just now kindly inform'd that Erasmus is greatly enrag'd against you, and that Alberto talks

likewise of breaking the bones of your Mascaril on account of his daughter,

Mascaril. I? I stand for nothing in all this confusion. What have I done, to have my bones broke? am I guardian then of the virginity of all the girls in the town, that I'm thus threaten'd? have I any power over temptation? and can I help it, poor rascal, if their heart prompts them?

Valere. Oh! they'll not be so mischievous as they say; and Eraustus won't have such a great bargain of us, whatever fine heat his love may have rais'd in him.

Rapiere. If you should have any occasion, my arm's entirely at your service; you know of old that I'm a staunch blade.

Valere. I am obliged to you, Mr. Rapiere.

Rapiere. I have likewise two friends I can give you, who are men that will draw upon all comers, and on whom you may safely rely.

Mascaril. Accept of them, Sir.

Valere. You are too complaisant.

Rapiere. Little Giles might have likewise assisted us, if a sad accident had not taken him from us. It was a great pity, Sir! a man of service too! You know the trick justice serv'd him: he died like a Caesar, and when the executioner broke him on the wheel, he could not make him let slip a word.

Valere. Mr. Rapiere, such a man as that ought to be lamented; but as to your guard, I thank you.

Rapiere. Be it so; but be inform'd that he seeks you, and may prove a scurvy match for you.

Valere. And I, to shew you how much I fear him, will myself, if he seeks me, offer him what he demands; and will immediately go through all the town accompanied by him alone.

S C E N E IV.

VALERE, MASCARIL.

MASCARIL.

WHY, Sir, will you tempt heaven! what presumption is this! Lack-a-day! you see how they threaten us. How on every side —

Valere. What are you looking at there?

Mascaril. I smell a cudgel that way: in short, if my prudence is now to be trusted to, don't let us be so obstinate as to remain in the street; let us go and shut ourselves up.

Valere. Shut ourselves up? Darest thou, rascal, propose such a base action to me? Come along, and without more words resolve to follow me.

Mascaril. Alack, Sir! my dear master, life is so sweet! one can die but once; and 'tis for such a long time —

Valere. I shall knock thee o' the head, if I hear any more: here comes Ascanius; let's leave him; we must learn what side he'll resolve to take: however come along with me, and let us take out of the house what we shall want to fight with.

Mascaril. I have no great itching for it: curse on love, and those cursed wenches who will be tasting it, and then look as if butter would not melt in their mouth.

SCENE V.

ASCANIUS, FROSINA.

ASCANIUS.

IS it really true, Frosina, and don't I dream? Pray tell me the whole exactly.

Frosina. You'll know the particulars of it soon enough; be patient; these sort of accidents are commonly but too often repeated from time to time; 'tis enough for you to know that after this will which requir'd a boy to be born to make it stand good, the last time Alberto's wife was with child she was deliver'd of you, and she having long before underhand concerted her design, chang'd you for the son of Agnes, the nosegay-woman, who gave you as her own to my mother to nurse: this little innocent being snatch'd away by death, some ten months after, Alberto being absent, the fear of her husband, and maternal love gave occasion to a new stratagem: his wife then secretly took her true daughter again, you was chang'd into him who supply'd your place, and the death of that son which was taken into your family, was disguis'd to Alberto for that of his daughter. Here's the mystery of your fortune clear'd up, which your pretended mother has hitherto conceal'd: she gives reasons for it, and may have others, whereby her interests were not all yours: in short, this visit, from which I had so little hopes, has been of more service to your love than could have been imagin'd: this Agnes disowns you, and the revealing this secret became necessary on account of your other affair:

we have both of us inform'd your father of it : a letter of his wife's has confirm'd the whole ; and pushing our point yet farther, a little good fortune being join'd to our cunning, we have so well adjusted the interests of Alberto and Polidor, and unfolded the mystery to the latter so very gently, that we might not make things appear too terrible at first, and in a word, to tell you all, so prudently led his mind step by step, to an accommodation, that he shews as much desire as your father to confirm the knots, which your levity ty'd.

Ascanius. Ah, Frosina ! what joy do you lead me into, and what do I not owe to your fortunate care !

Frosina. Moreover, the good man is in a humour to make himself merry, and has forbid us to say any thing of it yet to his son.

SCENE VI.

POLIDOR, ASCANIUS, FROSINA.

POLIDOR.

COME hither, daughter, that name is now permitted me ; I know the secret which this habit conceal'd : you have done a bold action, wherein you have discovered so much wit and contrivance that I forgive it you, and think my son will be happy when he shall know the object of his love. You are worth a whole world, and I'll assure him so : but he's here, let us be merry upon the adventure : go and bring all your people quickly.

Ascanius. To obey you, Sir, shall be the first compliment I make you.

SCENE VII.

POLIDOR, VALERE, MASCARIL.

MASCARIL to Valere.

DISGRACES are often reveal'd by heaven: I have dream'd to-night of pearls unstrung, and broken eggs, Sir; this dream casts me down.

Valere. Cowardly rascal!

Polidor. Valere, a combat's coming on wherein all your valour will be necessary to you.

Mascaril. And will no-body stir to hinder people from cutting one another's throats? For my part, I would willingly: however, Sir, if any fatal accident should happen to deprive you of your son, don't accuse me for it.

Polidor. No, no, in this case I push him on myself to do what he ought.

Mascaril. Unnatural father!

Valere. This sentiment, Sir, shews you to be a man of courage, and I revere you for it. I might have offended you, and am to blame to have done all this without a father's consent; but whatever displeasure my fault might give you, nature always shews itself most powerful; and you do what is truly honourable in not being willing that the passion of Erastus should provoke me more.

Polidor. They made me just now afraid of his threats; but things have since chang'd their face: and you'll be attack'd by a stronger enemy, without being able to fly from him.

Mascaril. Is there no way of accommodation?

Valere. I fly from him? Heaven forbid! And who can this be?

Polidor. Ascanius.

Valere. Ascanius?

Polidor. Yes, you'll see him appear presently.

Valere. He, who has faithfully promis'd to serve me?

Polidor. Yes, 'tis he who intends to have a stroke with you; and is resolv'd that a single combat, in the field where honour calls you, shall determine your quarrel.

Mascaril. He's a brave man; he knows that generous hearts don't refer their quarrels to the decision of other people.

Polidor. In short, you are accus'd of an imposture, the resentment of which appear'd to me very reasonable; so that Alberto and I have agreed that you shall give Ascanius satisfaction for this injury: but that it should be publicly, and without any delay in the formality requisite in such a case.

Valere. And has Lucilia, father, out of a harden'd heart—

Polidor. Lucilia marries Erastus, and likewise condemns you; and the better to prove your story to be false, is resolv'd that the marriage be perform'd before your own eyes.

Valere. Hah! this is a piece of impudence sufficient to enrage me: she has lost then all sense, faith, conscience, and honour.

S C E N E VIII.

ALBERTO, POLIDOR, LUCILIA, ERASTUS,
VALERE, MASCARIL.

ALBERTO.

WELL! where are the combatants? they are bringing ours, have you prepar'd the courage of yours?

Valere. Yes, yes; here, I am ready, since you will force me to't. And if I have at all found cause to hesitate, a remainder of respect made me do it, and not the valour of the arm which opposes me. But I'm urg'd too far, that respect is at an end; my mind is resolv'd on the utmost extremity; and such a strange perfidy appears, that my love must boldly revenge itself. [To Lucilia.] Not that this love pretends any more to you; all it's flame is resolv'd into the heat of wrath, and when I have made your shame public, your guilty marriage shan't in the least disturb me. Go, this proceeding, Lucilia, is odious: scarce can I believe it from the report of my eyes; 'tis shewing yourself an enemy to all modesty, and you ought to die for shame.

Lucilia. Such talk as this might concern me, if I had not one at hand to revenge my cause. Here comes Ascanius, he'll be able, without much trouble, to make you change your language quickly.

SCENE THE LAST.

ALBERTO, POLIDOR, ASCANIUS, LUCILIA,
ERASTUS, VALERE, FROSINA, MARINET-
TA, GROS-RENARD, MASCARIL.

VALERE.

HE shall not do it, though he join'd twenty other arms to his own. I am sorry he defends a guilty sister, but since his error makes him quarrel with me, we'll give him satisfaction, and you too, my brave Amazon.

Erastus. I should have been concern'd in this; but as Ascanius has taken the affair upon himself, I'll have nothing more to do with it, but leave it to him.

Valere. 'Tis well done; prudence is always seasonable; but —

Erastus. He'll give us all satisfaction upon you.

Valere. He?

Polidor. Don't deceive yourself in the affair, you don't know yet what a strange young fellow Ascanius is.

Alberto. He's now ignorant of it; but he'll make him sensible of it in a little time.

Valere. Come on then, that he may make me sensible of it now.

Marinetta. What publicly?

Gros-Renard. That would not be decent.

Valere. Do you make a jest of me? I'll break the head of any one that laughs. But let us see the end.

Ascanius. No, no, I'm not so mischievous as they make me; and in this adventure wherein I am interested for every one, you'll see my weakness discover'd more

than any thing else. Heaven who disposes of us did not give me a heart to hold out against you, but reserv'd it an easy conquest to you to finish the fate of Lucilia's brother. Yes, far from boasting the power of his arm, Ascanius comes to receive death from you; nay, would gladly die, if his death could conduce to your satisfaction, by giving you a wife in the presence of all this company, who cannot justly belong to any one but you.

Valere, No, the whole world after her perfidy and impudent tricks —

Ascanius. Ah! Valere, suffer me to tell you, that the heart which is engag'd to you can be accus'd of no crime against you: her flame is always pure, and her constancy extreme; and I take your own father himself to witness it.

Polidor. Yes, son, we have laugh'd enough at your fury, 'tis now time I see to undeceive you. She to whom you are bound by oath is conceal'd under the habit you there see. An affair of money caus'd this disguise in her very infancy, which deceives so many people; and love has lately caus'd another, which deceiv'd you, in joining their family to ours. Don't look round upon every body thus, I now make a serious relation to you. Yes, in a word, 'tis she, whose crafty address obtain'd your vows in the night under Lucilia's name, and who, by this contrivance, which none apprehended, has sow'd so much perplexity amongst you. But since Ascanius now gives place to Dorothea, we must see all imposture taken off of your love, and by a more sacred knot strengthen the first.

Alberto. And this is actually the single combat, which is to repair your offence with us, and which no edict has ever forbid.

Polidor. This event gives you confusion ; but 'twould be in vain for you to hesitate upon it.

Valere. No, no, ; I would not think of guarding myself against it. If this adventure surprizes me, 'tis a surprize that pleases me, and I find myself seiz'd at once with wonder, love, and delight. Is it possible that those eyes —

Alberto. That habit, dear Valere, won't admit of any fine speeches you may make her. Let us go and put her on another, and in the mean time you shall know the particulars of this accident.

Valere. Pardon me, Lucilla, if my deceived mind —

Lucilla. 'Tis an easy matter to forget that injury.

Alberto. Come, this compliment will do well at home, and we shall have leisure all of us to compliment one another.

Eraustus. But in talking after this manner you don't consider that there still remains here what may cause slaughter : our loves are indeed crown'd, but who ought to possess Marinetta here, his Mascaril, or my Gros-Renard ? This affair must be determin'd by bloodshed.

Mascaril. Naw, naw, my blood sits too well in my body ; let him marry her in peace, 'twill be nothing to me. Considering the humour which I know my dear Marinetta is of, marriage won't shut the door against courtship.

Marinetta. And dost thou think I'll make thee my gallant ? As for a husband, 'tis no matter, we ought to take him such as he is, one don't there stand so much upon ceremony ; but a gallant should be well made enough to make one's mouth water.

Gros-Renard. Harkye, when marriage has join'd our hides, I insist upon your being deaf to all sparks.

182 THE AMOROUS QUARREL.

Mascaril. Do you think, brother, to marry her for yourself alone?

Gros-Renard. You judge right; I'll have a virtuous wife, or I'll make a blessed noise.

Mascaril. Ah! lack-a-day, you'll do as others do, and will make yourself easy. These people who are so severe and critical before matrimony, often degenerate into pacific husbands.

Marinetta. Well, well, dear husband, don't in the least fear my fidelity, flattery will do no good with me, and I'll tell you all.

Mascaril. Oh! a fine practice! a husband made a confidant.

Marinetta. Hold your tongue, knave of clubs.

Alberto. The third time, I say, let us go home to pursue freely this joyful conversation.

7 MA 55
THE END.

THE
MISER.

COMEDY.

A C T O R S.

HARPAGON, Father of Cleanthes and Eliza, and in love with Mariana.

ANSELM, Father of Valere and Mariana.

CLEANTHES, Son of Harpagon, in love with Mariana.

ELIZA, Daughter of Harpagon.

VALERE, Son of Anselm, in love with Eliza.

MARIANA, Daughter to Anselm.

FROSINA, a woman of intrigue.

Mr. SIMON, a broker.

Mr. JAMES, Cook and coachman to Harpagon.

LA FLECHE, Servant to Cleanthes.

CLAUDIA, Servant to Harpagon.

BRINDAVOIN,

LA MERLUCHE, } Harpagon's lacquies.

A Commissary.

SCENE Paris, in Harpagon's house.



T H E

M I S E R.

A C T I. S C E N E I.

V A L E R E, E L I Z A.

V A L E R E.

WHAT, my charming Eliza, grow melancholy, after the obliging assurances you were so good as to give me of your fidelity? I see you sighing, alas! in the midst of my joy! Tell me, is it through regret that you have made me happy? And do you repent that engagement which the warmth of my passion has with difficulty forc'd from you?

Eliza. No, Valere, 'tis not in my power to repent of any thing I do for you. I find myself drawn that way by a force too enchanting, and I am not able, even to form a wish that what is done should be undone. But to say the truth, the consequence gives me some disquiet; and I am much afraid of loving you a little more than I ought to do.

Valere. Fy! Eliza: what can you fear in the kindness you bear me?

Eliza. Alas! a thousand things at a time: the resentments of a father; the reproaches of my family; the censures of the world; but above all, Valere, a change

in your affection; that criminal coldness with which those of your sex most frequently requite the too warm proofs of an innocent love.

Valere. Ah! do me not that wrong, to judge of me by others. Suspect me of any thing, Eliza, rather than a failure in my devoirs to you. I love you too much for that; and my affection to you shall be as lasting as my life.

Eliza. Ah! Valere, every body talks in the same strain; all men are alike in their words; and 'tis only their actions discover them different.

Valere. Since our actions alone discover what we are, wait at least then, to judge of my heart by them; and don't search out crimes for me, in the unjust fears of a tormenting anticipation: pr'ythee don't kill me with the severe strokes of a cruel suspicion, but allow me time to convince you, by a thousand and a thousand proofs, of the sincerity of my passion.

Eliza. Alas! how easily do we suffer ourselves to be persuaded by those we love! Yes, Valere, I look upon your heart as utterly incapable of deceiving me; I believe you love me with a real passion, and that you will ever be constant to me: I would not so much as doubt of this; and all that concerns me, is an apprehension of the censures which people may pass on me.

Valere. But why this uneasiness?

Eliza. I should have nothing to fear, would all the world look upon you with the same eyes that I do; I see enough in your person to vindicate every thing I do for you. My heart has your merit to plead for it's defence, supported by the assistance of that gratitude with which heaven has bound me to you. I call to mind every moment that astonishing danger which first gave

rife to our mutual regard; that surprizing generofity which made you rifque your own life, to snatch mine from the fury of the waves; that moft tender concern which you discover'd after you had dragged me out of the water; the affiduous homage of that ardent love, which neither time nor difficulties could discourage, and which, making you neglect both kindred and country, detains you in this place, keeps your fortune ftill difguifed in favour of me, and has reduced you for the fight of me, to take upon you the employment of a domeftic of my father's. All this has, undoubtedly, a wonderful effect upon me, and is fufficient, in my eyes, to juftify that engagement, which I prevailed upon myfelf to confent to: but 'tis not enough, perhaps, to juftify it to others; and I am not fure they will enter into my fentiments.

Valere. Of all that you have mentioned, 'tis only by my love that I pretend to merit any thing with you; and as to the fcruples you have, your father himfelf takes but too much care to juftify you to all the world; his excefs of avarice, and the aulfere manner with which he lives with his children, might authorize things yet more ftrange. Pardon me, charming Eliza, that I fpeak of him in this manner before you; you know that on this head one can fay nothing good; but in fhort, if I can, as I hope I fhall, find my relations again, we fhall have no great trouble to gain him on our fide. I expect fome tidings of them with great impatience; and if they fhould ftay much longer, I myfelf will go in fearch of them.

Eliza. Ah! Valere, ftir not hence, I intreat you; think only how to work yourfelf into my father's favour.

Valere. You see how I go about it, and the artful compliance I was forc'd to make use of, to introduce myself into his service; under what mask of sympathy and similitude of sentiments with his, I disguise myself to please him; and what part I perpetually act with him in order to win his heart. I succeed in this affair to admiration, and find that to be in the good graces of men, there's not a better way than to dress yourself out to their view, in their own inclinations, and to give into their maxims, to praise their foibles, and applaud every thing they do. There is no need at all to fear overcharging our complaisance; no matter whether the manner in which we play upon them be visible, your sliest people are always grand dupes on the side of flattery; and there is nothing so impertinent and so ridiculous which we may not bring them to swallow, when we season it with praise, sincerity suffers a little by the trade I follow. But when we have need of men, we may reasonably be allowed to suit ourselves to their taste; and since we have no other way, but this, to compass them, it is not the fault of those who flatter, but of those who will be flattered.

Eliza. But why don't you endeavour also to gain my brother for a support, in case the servant should take it into her head to betray our secret?

Valere. There is no managing them both at once; the temper of the father, and that of the son, are things so opposite, that it is difficult to reconcile a confidence with both at the same time. But you, on your part, will please to transact the business with your brother, and take the advantage of the friendship there is betwixt you two, to bring him over to our interests. Here he comes. I'll step aside. Lay hold of this opportunity

of breaking it to him ; and let him no farther into our affair than you shall think advisable.

Eliza. I don't know whether I shall have the power to lay myself thus open to him.

SCENE II.

CLEANTHES, ELIZA.

CLEANTHES.

I AM very glad to find you alone, sister ; and I was impatient to speak with you, to impart a certain secret to you.

Eliza. Here I am, brother, ready to give you the hearing. What is it you have to say to me ?

Cleantes. A world of things, sister, comprehended in one word.— I am in love.

Eliza. In love ?

Cleantes. Yes, in love : but, before I go any farther. I know that I depend on a father, and that the name of son subjects me to his pleasure ; that we ought not to engage ourselves, without the consent of those who gave us birth ; that heaven has made them masters of our vows ; and that we are enjoined not to dispose of ourselves, but by their direction : that they, not being under the prejudice of a foolish passion, are in a condition of being imposed upon, much less than we ; and of seeing better what is proper for us ; that we ought rather to trust to the eyes of their prudence, than to the blindness of our passion ; and that the heat of youth very often draws us upon dangerous precipices. I say all this to you, sister, that you should not give yourself the

trouble of saying it to me ; for in short, my love will suffer me to hear nothing can be said ; and I beg of you not to make me any remonstrances.

Eliza. Have you engaged yourself, brother, with her you love ?

Cleanthes. No, but I have determined to do it ; and I conjure you once more to bring me no reasons to dissuade me from it.

Eliza. Am I, brother, so strange a person ?

Cleanthes. No, sister, but you are not in love ; you are ignorant of that sweet violence which the tender passion commits upon our hearts, and I am afraid of your wisdom.

Eliza. Alas ! brother, not a word about my wisdom. There are no persons but are deficient that way, at least, once in their lives ; and if I lay open my heart to you, I shall perhaps appear much less discreet in your eyes than yourself.

Cleanthes. Ah ! would heaven your heart, like mine —

Eliza. Let us finish your affair first of all ; and tell me who is the person you are in love with.

Cleanthes. A young creature who lodges of late in this neighbourhood, and who seems to be made to inspire all that behold her, with love ; nature, my dear sister, has form'd nothing more lovely ; I was in transports from the moment I saw her. Her name is Mariana, and she lives under the direction of a good woman her mother, who is almost always sick, and for whom this dear girl entertains sentiments of friendship not to be imagined. She waits upon her, bemoans her, comforts her with a tenderness that would touch you to the very soul. She goes about every thing she does with

an air the most charming in the world; and there are a thousand graces shine in all her actions; a sweetness most winning, a good-nature all engaging, a modesty adorable. a — Ah! sister, I wish you had but seen her.

Eliza. I see a great deal of her, dear brother, in what you've told me; and to comprehend what she is, it is sufficient for me that you love her.

Cleanthes. I have learn'd, underhand, that they are not in extraordinary circumstances, and that their frugal management has much ado to spin out the small matter they are possessed of, so as to answer all their necessities. Imagine with yourself, sister, what joy it must be to raise the fortune of a person one loves; to contribute in a handsome manner, some small relief to the modest necessities of a virtuous family: and think with yourself what grief it must be to me, to see that, by the avarice of a father, I am under an impossibility of tasting this joy, and of discovering to this fair one any testimony of my love.

Eliza. Yes, brother, I sufficiently conceive what your concern must be.

Cleanthes. Ah! sister, it is greater than one can believe: for in short, can any thing be more cruel, than that rigorous close-fisted usage with which we are kept under; that strange barrenness in which we're made to starve? And what good will it do us to have means, if they don't fall to us but at a time when we are past the prime of enjoying them; and if I am forc'd, even for my necessary support, to run myself in debt with every body about me; if you and I are reduc'd to hunt about daily for relief from tradesmen, to be in a capacity of clothing ourselves with common decency? In short, I wanted to speak with you, to help me sound

my father upon my present sentiments ; and if I find he opposes them, I am determin'd to go elsewhere, with this lovely creature, and make the best of that fortune which providence shall throw in our way. I'm ransacking high and low to borrow money with this design ; and if your affairs, sister, resemble mine, and it must be so that our father opposes our inclinations, we will even both leave him, and free ourselves from that tyranny in which his insupportable avarice has so long confin'd us.

Eliza. It is very true, he gives us every day more and more reason to regret the loss of our mother, and that —

Cleantes. I hear his voice : let us step at a distance a little, that we may thoroughly unbosom ourselves ; and afterwards we'll join our forces, to make our attack on the ruggedness of his temper.

SCENE III.

HARPAGON, LA FLECHE.

HARPAGON.

HENCE this moment, and let me have no more prating. March then, scamper out of my house, thou finish'd, sworn rascal, thou true gallows-swinger.

La Fleche. Never did I see any thing so villanous as this cursed old fellow ; I'm of opinion, under correction, that he's possess'd.

Harpagon. Dost mutter between thy teeth ?

La Fleche. Why do you drive me out thus ?

Harpagon. It well becomes thee, scoundrel, to ask

me

me reasons, indeed! get out, quick, that I may not beat out thy brains.

La Fleche. What have I done to you?

Harpagon. Done this, made me resolve thou shalt be gone.

La Fleche. My master, your son, has given me orders to wait for him.

Harpagon. Go, and wait for him in the street, and not in my house, planted bolt upright like a stake, to observe what passes, and make thy ends of every thing. I won't have eternally before my eyes a spy upon all my affairs, a traitor, whose cursed eyes besiege all my actions, devour what I have, and ferret about in every corner to see whether there's any thing to pilfer.

La Fleche. How the duce can any one contrive to steal from you? Are you a man to be robb'd, who keep every thing under lock and key, and stand centinel day and night?

Harpagon. I will lock up every thing I think proper, and stand centinel as I please. Are not these a pretty parcel of spies upon me, who make observations upon every thing one does? [Aside.] I tremble for fear he has suspected something about my money. Don't you fellow raise stories about that I have money hid in my house?

La Fleche. Have you money hid?

Harpagon. No rascal, I don't say so. I shall run mad. I only ask whether thou wilt not maliciously raise a report that I have?

La Fleche. Plague! what matters it to us that you have, or that you have not, since 'tis just the same thing to us?

Harpagon. Ho! you turn reasoner, do you? I'll

give you a reason in at your ears. [Lifting up his hand to give La Fleche a box on the ear.] Get ye hence, once more.

La Fleche. Well, I'm a going.

Harpagon. Stay, hast thou carry'd nothing away from me?

La Fleche. What should I carry away from you?

Harpagon. Come hither that I may see; shew me thy hands.

La Fleche. There.

Harpagon. T'other,

La Fleche. T'other?

Harpagon. Yes.

La Fleche. There.

Harpagon. Hast thou cramm'd nothing in here?

[Pointing to La Fleche's breeches.]

La Fleche. Look yourself.

Harpagon, feeling the knees of his breeches.] These wide-knee'd breeches are proper receivers of stolen goods; and I wish some body had been hang'd —

La Fleche aside.] Ah! how richly does such a fellow as this deserve what he fears! and what joy would it give me to rob him!

Harpagon. Heh!

La Fleche. What?

Harpagon. What is it you talk of robbing?

La Fleche. I say that you feel pretty well round about, to see if I have robbed you.

Harpagon. That's what I would do.

[Feels in La Fleche's pockets.]

La Fleche aside.] Pox take all stinginess, and stingy curs.

Harpagon. How? what d'ye say?

La Fleche. What do I say!

Harpagon. Yes. What d'ye say of stinginess, and stingy curs?

La Fleche. I say a pox take all stinginess, and stingy curs.

Harpagon. Whom d'ye speak of?

La Fleche. Of the stingy.

Harpagon. And who are those stingy?

La Fleche. Villains, curmudgeons.

Harpagon. But who do you mean by that?

La Fleche. What is it you are uneasy about?

Harpagon. I am uneasy about what I ought to be.

La Fleche. Is it that you believe I intend to speak of you?

Harpagon. I believe what I believe; but I have a mind you should tell me whom you speak to, when you say that.

La Fleche. I speak — I speak — to my cap.

Harpagon. And I could find in my heart to speak to thy crown.

La Fleche. Will you hinder me from cursing the covetous?

Harpagon. No; but I'll hinder thee from prating, and being insolent. Hold thy tongue.

La Fleche. I name no-body.

Harpagon. A word more I'll break thy bones.

La Fleche. If the cap fits any body, let him take it.

Harpagon. Not done yet?

La Fleche. Yes, much against my will.

Harpagon. Ha! hah!

La Fleche. [showing him one of his waste-coat pockets.] Stay; here is one pocket more; are you satisfy'd?

Harpagon. Come, give it me, without the trouble of rummaging for it.

La Fleche. What?

Harpagon. What thou hast took from me.

La Fleche. I've taken nothing at all from you.

Harpagon. Really?

La Fleche. Really.

Harpagon. Adieu then, and the d—I go with thee.

La Fleche aside.] So; I am blessedly dismissed.

Harpagon. I charge it home upon thy conscience, however.

SCENE IV.

HARPAGON alone.

THERE is a rascal of a valet, who is a constant vexation to me: I don't like to see such a good for nothing cur about me. In troth 'tis no small plague to keep a great sum of money by one; and happy is he who has all his cash at good interest, and reserves no more in his own hands than needs must for common expences: one's not a little puzzled to find, in the whole house, a trusty hoarding-place; for your strong boxes are, to me, very suspicious places, and I would never trust them. I look upon them to be mere bait for thieves, and they are always the first thing they make an attack upon.

SCENE V.

HARPAGON, ELIZA and CLEANTHES
talking together at the farther part of the stage

HARPAGON thinking himself alone.

IN the mean while I'm not sure whether I've done right in burying the ten thousand crowns in my garden, which were paid me in yesterday. — Ten thousand crowns in gold is a sum sufficiently — [Seeing the brother and sister whispering together.] O heavens! I have betray'd myself; my warmth transported me; I believe I spoke aloud when I was talking to myself. [To Cleanthes and Eliza.] What's the matter?

Cleanthes. Nothing, father.

Harpagon. Have you been there any time?

Eliza. We were but this moment come hither.

Harpagon. Did you overhear —

Cleanthes. What, father?

Harpagon. What I —

Eliza. What might it be?

Harpagon. What I was just now a saying.

Cleanthes. No.

Harpagon. You did, you did.

Eliza. With submission we did not.

Harpagon. I see well enough you heard some few words. I was discoursing to myself about the difficulty, now-a-days, of coming at money; and I was saying that happy is he who hath ten thousand crowns in his house,

Cleanthes. We were afraid of coming up to you, for fear we should interrupt you.

Harpagon. I am very glad to acquaint you with what I said, that you might not take things the wrong way, and fancy with yourselves I said it was I, who had ten thousand crowns.

Cleanthes. We don't pry into your affairs.

Harpagon. Would I had them, those ten thousand crowns.

Cleanthes. I don't believe —

Harpagon. It would be a fine thing for me.

Eliza. These are things. —

Harpagon. I should find an use for them.

Cleanthes. I'm of opinion that —

Harpagon. It would be of great service to me.

Eliza. You are —

Harpagon. And I should make no complaints, as I do now, that the times are hard.

Cleanthes. Bless me! father, you have no reason to complain; the world knows you have wealth sufficient.

Harpagon. How! I wealth sufficient? They that say it are liars: there is nothing more false, and they are rascals who raise all these reports.

Eliza. Don't put yourself into a passion.

Harpagon. 'Tis strange that my own children should betray me, and turn my enemies!

Cleanthes. Is it being your enemy, to tell you that you have wealth?

Harpagon. Yes: such kind of talk, and the expences you are at, will be the occasion, one of these days, of peoples coming to cut my throat, under the imagination that I am made up of nothing else but guineas.

Cleanthes. What great expence am I at?

Harpagon. What? is there any thing more scandalous than that sumptuous equipage with which you jant

it about town? I was scolding your sister yesterday, but this is still ten times worse. It perfectly cries to heaven for vengeance; and were one to take you from head to foot, one might find enough to purchase an handsome annuity for life. I have told you twenty times, son, that all your ways very much displease me: you give furiously into the marquis; and you must certainly rob me, to go drest as you do.

Cleanthes. How, rob you?

Harpagon. How should I know? Where can you get wherewithal to support the grandeur you live in?

Cleanthes. I, father? 'tis by play: and as I am very lucky, I lay out all the money I win upon my back.

Harpagon. 'Tis very ill done. If you have luck at play, you should make good use of it, and put out the money you win to honest interest, that you might find it another time. I should be glad to know, without mentioning the rest, to what purpose serve all these ribbons, with which you are so finely larded from head to foot; and whether half a dozen hooks and eyes would not be enough to fasten your breeches knees? What need is there to lay out money for perukes, when one may wear hair of one's own growth, that costs nothing? I'll hold a wager that what in peruke, and what in ribbons, there go at least twenty guineas: and twenty guineas bring in, at least, one pound thirteen shillings and eleven pence farthing *per annum*, at only eight *per cent.* interest.

Cleanthes. Very true.

Harpagon. No more of this, let's talk of other business. [Aside, seeing Cleanthes and Eliza making signs to one another.] Mercy on me! I believe they are mak-

ing signs to one another, to pick my pocket. [Aloud.] What mean those gestures?

Eliza. We are bargaining, my brother and I, who shall speak first; and we have each of us something to say to you.

Harpagon. And I likewise have something to say to each of you.

Cleanthes. 'Tis about marriage, father, that we have a desire to talk with you.

Harpagon. 'Tis about marriage that I want to discourse you.

Eliza. Ah! father.

Harpagon. Why that ah? is it the word, daughter, or the thing that frights you?

Cleanthes. Matrimony may be frightful in both respects, in the manner you may design it; and we are afraid our sentiments may not happen to agree with your choice.

Harpagon. A little patience. Don't fright yourselves: I know what is proper for you both; and you shall have no reason, either of you, to make complaints of any thing I intend to do. [To Cleanthes.] And to begin at the right end: have you seen, pray tell me, a young person whose name is Mariana, who lodges not far from this place?

Cleanthes. Yes, father.

Harpagon. And you, child?

Eliza. I've heard speak of her.

Harpagon. How do you like this girl, son?

Cleanthes. She is a very fine creature.

Harpagon. Her looks?

Cleanthes. Ingenuous, and sprightly.

Harpagon. Her air and manner?

Cleanthes. Admirable, undoubtedly.

Harpagon. Don't you think that such a girl as this sufficiently deserves to be considered of?

Cleanthes. Yes, Father.

Harpagon. That this would be a desirable match?

Cleanthes. Most desirable.

Harpagon. That she has all the appearance of making an excellent housewife?

Cleanthes. Without dispute.

Harpagon. And that a husband might live comfortably with her?

Cleanthes. Certainly.

Harpagon. There is a trifling difficulty in it: I am afraid she has not so much money, as one might reasonably pretend to.

Cleanthes. Oh! Sir, money is no great matter, when the question is about marrying a person of virtue.

Harpagon. Pardon me, pardon me. But there is this to be said for it, that if one does not find the riches answer one's wish, one may endeavour to make it up in something else,

Cleanthes. That is to be supposed.

Harpagon. In short, I'm very glad to find you chime in with my way of thinking: for her honest deportment, and sweetness of temper, have gain'd my heart; and I am resolv'd to marry her, provided I find she has something of a portion.

Cleanthes. O heavens!

Harpagon. What now?

Cleanthes. You are resolv'd you say —

Harpagon. To marry Mariana.

Cleanthes. Who, you? you?

Harpagon. Yes, I, I, I. What can all this mean?

Cleanthes. A dizziness has seiz'd me all o' the sudden, and I'll withdraw a little.

Harpagon. 'Twill be soon over. Go quickly into the kitchen, and drink a large glass of fair water.

SCENE VI.

HARPAGON, ELIZA.

HARPAGON.

THESE are your flimsy beaux, who have no more heart than chickens. This, daughter, is what I have resolv'd in respect to myself. As to your brother, I have pitch'd upon a certain widow for him, who was spoke of to me this morning; and for thee, I'll give thee to signior Anselm.

Eliza. To signior Anselm?

Harpagon. Yes. A stay'd, prudent, and wise man, who is not above fifty years old, and is reported to be very rich.

Eliza curt'sying.] I have no inclination to marry, father, if you please.

Harpagon curt'sying again.] And I've an inclination, that my little girl, my precious, should marry, if it pleases.

Eliza curt'sying again.] I beg your pardon, father.

Harpagon curt'sying again.] I beg your pardon, daughter.

Eliza. I am signior Anselm's most humble servant. [Curt'sying again.] But, with your leave, I will not marry him.

Harpagon. I am your most humble slave. [Curt'sy-

ing again.] But, with your leave, you shall marry him this very night.

Eliza. This very night?

Harpagon. This very night.

Eliza curt'fying again.] This can't be, father.

Harpagon curt'fying again.] This must be, daughter.

Eliza. No.

Harpagon. Yes.

Eliza. No, I tell you.

Harpagon. Yes, I tell you.

Eliza. 'Tis a thing you shall never force me to do.

Harpagon. 'Tis a thing I will force you to do.

Eliza. I'll sooner make away with myself, than marry such a husband.

Harpagon. You shall not make away with yourself, and you shall marry him. But see what assurance is here! Did ever any body see a daughter speak after this manner to a father?

Eliza. But did ever any body see a father marry his daughter in this manner?

Harpagon. 'Tis a match to which there can be no objection; and I hold a wager all the world will approve my choice.

Eliza. And I'll lay that it can't be approv'd by any reasonable person.

Harpagon. Here comes Valere: have you a mind that we shall make him a judge between us in this affair?

Eliza. With all my heart.

Harpagon. But will you be determin'd by his judgment.

Eliza. Yes. I'll stand by whatever he says.

Harpagon. 'Tis done.

SCENE VII.

VALERE, HARPAGON, ELIZA.

HARPAGON.

COME hither, Valere, we have pitch'd upon you to acquaint us who is in the right, my daughter, or I.

Valere. 'Tis you, Sir, beyond all dispute.

Harpagon. Do you know very well what we are talking about?

Valere. No. But you can't be in the wrong, you are all reason.

Harpagon. I have a mind, this evening, to give her a man for a husband who is equally rich and wise; and the baggage tells me to my face, that she scorns to take him. What do you say to that?

Valere. What do I say to it?

Harpagon. Yes.

Valere. I, I —

Harpagon. What?

Valere. I say that in the main, I am of your opinion, and you can't possibly fail of being in the right. But at the same time, she is not absolutely in the wrong; and —

Harpagon. How so? signior Anselm is a considerable match; he is a person of quality, sweet-temper'd, stay'd, discreet, and in great circumstances, and who has no child left by his former marriage. Could she be better fitted?

Valere. That's true. But then she might tell you, that this is hurrying matters something of the fastest;

and that some time, at least, should have been given, to try whether her inclination might reconcile itself with—

Harpagon. 'Tis an opportunity which we must catch quickly by the forelock. I find an advantage here, which I should not find elsewhere ; and he engages himself to take her without a portion.

Valere. Without a portion ?

Harpagon. Yes.

Valere. Oh ! I say not a word more. You see here is a reason absolutely convincing ; you must yield to this.

Harpagon. This is a considerable saving to me.

Valere. Most certainly, this admits of no contradiction. 'Tis true, your daughter may represent to you, that marriage is a more important affair than people are apt to conceive ; that 'tis a commencing happy or unhappy for life ; and that an engagement which is to last till death, should never be made without great precaution.

Harpagon. Without a portion.

Valere. You say right. That's what decides all, that's taken for granted. There are people might tell you, that, on such occasions, the inclination of a daughter is, doubtless, a thing which ought to be regarded ; and that this great disparity of age, of humour, and of sentiments, makes a marriage subject to most vexatious accidents.

Harpagon. Without a portion.

Valere. Oh ! there's no reply to that. We very well know it. Who the duce can stand against it ? Not but that there are many fathers who would like much better to husband well the satisfaction of their children, than the money they might give with them ; who would never sacrifice them to interest, and would study above every thing, to mix in a match that sweet conformity,

which continually maintains the honour, tranquillity, and joy of it ; and that —

Harpagon. Without a portion.

Valere. 'Tis true. That stops every mouth ; *Without a portion* : shew me a way to withstand such an argument as that ?

Harpagon aside, looking towards the garden.] Bless me ! I think I hear a dog barking ; is it not somebody who has a design upon my money ? [To Valere.] Do not stir, I'll return in an instant.

SCENE VIII.

ELIZA, VALERE.

ELIZA.

ARE you in jest. Valere, to talk to him as you do ?

Valere. 'Tis that I may not exasperate him, and may compass my end the better. Directly to fall foul on his sentiments is the way to spoil all. There are some people must be taken only the round-about way ; tempers averse to all resistance ; restif natures, that sling against truth ; who always bear obstinately against the right road of reason, whom you can never bring where you would have them, but by winding them about. Seem to consent to what he has a mind to, you'll gain your point the better ; and —

Eliza. But this marriage, Valere ?

Valere. We'll study some way to break it off.

Eliza. But what invention to find, if it must be concluded this evening ?

Valere. You must desire it may be delay'd, and feign some disorder.

Eliza. But they'll discover the counterfeit, if they call in the physicians.

Valere. You jest sure? Do they know any thing of the matter? Pooh! pooh! You may have what distemper you please for all them; they'll find you reasons to account for the cause of it.

SCENE IX.

HARPAGON, ELIZA, VALERE.

HARPAGON aside, at the further part of the stage.

'TIS nothing, thank heaven.

Valere not seeing Harpagon.] In short our last resort is, that slight will screen us from every thing; and if your love, fair Eliza, is capable of a firmness,——

[Spying Harpagon.] Yes, it is fitting that a daughter should be obedient to a father; she ought by no means to mind the make of a husband; and when the substantial argument of *without a portion* offers itself, she ought to be ready to take any thing one will give her.

Harpagon. Good. That was admirably said.

Valere. Sir, I ask pardon, if I am a little warm, and take the liberty to talk to her in the manner I do.

Harpagon. How! I am charmed with it, and it is my pleasure that you take her absolutely under your power.

[To Eliza.] Nay, it signifies nothing to run away. I give him the same authority over you that heaven has given me, and will have you comply with every thing he directs ——

Valere to Eliza.] After this, resist my remonstrances.

SCENE X.

HARPAGON, VALERE.

VALERE.

I'LL follow her, Sir, and give her more of the same lectures.

Harpagon. Do so. You'll oblige me. Verily——
Valere. It is good to keep a strict hand over her.

Harpagon. That is true. We must ——

Valere. Give yourself no manner of trouble, I think
I shall bring it to bear.

Harpagon. Do, do. I am going to take a short turn
in the city, and shall be back again presently.

Valere going towards that side of the stage where

Eliza went off, and speaking as to her.

Yes : money is the most valuable thing in this world ;
and you ought to thank heaven for the worthy man of
a father it has bestowed on you. He knows what it is
to live. When a person offers to take off a daughter
without a portion, one ought to look no further. Every
thing is included in that. And, *without a portion*, sup-
plies the place of beauty, youth, pedigree, honour, wis-
dom, and probity.

Harpagon alone.] Ah ! brave boy ! This is speaking
like an orator : happy is he who has such a servant as
this !

ACT II. SCENE I.

CLEANTHES, LA FLECHE.

CLEANTHES.

HEY! Mr. Rascal as you are! Where have you been thrusting in your impertinent nose? Did not I order you? —

La Fleche. Yes, Sir, and I came here to attend you; but your father, a most ungracious mortal, drove me out in spite of my teeth, and I ran the risque of being cudged.

Cleantes. How goes our affair? Things are more urgent than ever; and since I left you, I have discovered that my father is my rival.

La Fleche. Your father in love?

Cleantes. Yes; and I had all the difficulty in the world to conceal from him the disorder which this news threw me into.

La Fleche. He dabble in love-affairs! What the duce does he think of! has he a mind to put a joke upon the world? and was love designed for people of his make?

Cleantes. It must needs happen, for my sins, that this passion should have got into his head.

La Fleche. But for what reason do you make a mystery to him of your being in love?

Cleantes. To give him less suspicion, and reserve myself, in case of need, the easiest means of breaking off the match — What answer have they made you?

La Fleche. I' good troth, Sir, those that borrow are

in a scurvy way ; one must bear with strange things when one's under necessity, as you are, of passing thro' the hands of a money-scrivener.

Cleanthes. Won't the job be done at all then ?

La Fleche. Pardon me. Our Mr. Simon the broker, who is recommended to us as an active, stirring fellow, tells me he has left no stone unturned to serve you, and protests that your looks alone have gained his heart.

Cleanthes. I shall have the fifteen thousand livres then, that I ask ?

La Fleche. Yes ; but upon some trifling conditions, which it is necessary you should accept, if you design matters should do.

Cleanthes. Did he bring you to the speech of him who was to lend the money ?

La Fleche. No truly, this business is not transacted after that fashion. He takes even more pains to be hid than you do, and here are mysteries much greater than you imagine. He would by no means tell me his name : and he is to be brought to an interview with you to-day at a strange house, to be informed from your own mouth, of your substance and your family ; and I make no manner of doubt, but the name only of your father will make things very easy.

Cleanthes. And chiefly my mother's being dead, whose jointure no-body can hinder me of.

La Fleche. Here are some articles which he himself dictated to our broker, to be shown you, before any thing can be done.

" On supposition that the lender sees all his securities
" good, and the borrower be of age, of a family whose
" estate is great, solid, and secure, clear and free from
" all incumbrances, a good, punctual bond shall be ex-

“ ecuted before a notary, the honestest man can possibly
“ be had, and who, for that purpose, must be chose by
“ the lender, to whom it is of the greatest importance
“ that the instrument be rightly drawn up.

Cleanthes. There is nothing to be said against this.

La Fleche. “ The lender, not to load his conscience
“ with the least scruple, does not pretend to place out
“ his money at more than eighteen *per cent*.”

Cleanthes. At eighteen *per cent* ! O’ my soul an honest fellow ! There is no room to complain of this.

La Fleche. That is true.

“ But as the lender aforesaid has not by him the sum
“ under debate, and that to do the borrower a favour,
“ he himself is necessitated to borrow of another, on
“ the foot of five *per cent*, it will be but reasonable that
“ the said first borrower pay that interest, without pre-
“ judice to the other, as considering it is only to ob-
“ lige him that the said lender engages himself to bor-
“ row this.

Cleanthes. The devil ! What a Jew ! What a Turk
is here ? It is above twenty *per cent*.

La Fleche. Very true ; that is what I said ; you had
best consider on it.

Cleanthes. What wouldst thou have me to consider ?
I want money, and I must agree to it all.

La Fleche. That very answer I made him.

Cleanthes. Is there any thing more ?

La Fleche. One small article only.

“ Of the fifteen thousand livres required, the lender
“ will not be able to pay in cash more than twelve thou-
“ sand ; and as to the thousand crowns remaining, the
“ borrower must take them out in household-stuff, furni-
“ ture, and trinkets ; of which follows the inventory,

"and which the said lender has honestly put at the
"most moderate price he possibly could."

Cleanthes. What means all this?

La Fleche. Hear the inventory.

Imprimis, "One standing bed, with lace of point of
"Hungary, handsomly sow'd upon an olive-colour'd
"cloth; with six chairs, and a counterpain of the same,
"all in good condition, and lined with a changeable
"taffety, red and blue.

Item, "One tent-bed, of a good dry rose-coloured
"serge, with the fringes of silk."

Cleanthes. What would he have me do with this?

La Fleche. Hold.

Item, "One suit of tapestry hangings, being the a-
"mours of Gombaut and Macaca.

Item, "One large walnut-tree table, with twelve co-
"lumns, or turn'd pillars, drawing out at each end, and
"fitted up with it's half dozen joint-stools under it.

Cleanthes. 'Sdeath what have I to do —

La Fleche. Have patience.

Item, "Three large musquets in-laid with mother of
"pearl, the rests suited to them.

Item, "One brick furnace, with two retorts, and
"three recipients, very useful for those who are curious
"in distillations.

Cleanthes. I shall go mad.

La Fleche. Gently.

Item, "One Bologna lute, with it's complement of
"strings, or but few wanting.

Item, "One fox and goose table, one chefs board,
"with the play of the goose, restored from the Greeks,
"very proper to pass away the time, when one has no-
"thing to do.

Item, " One lizard skin, three foot and a half, stuffed
" with hay ; a pretty curiosity to hang up at the cieling
" of a chamber.

" The total above-mentioned being honestly worth
" four thousand five hundred livres, is reduced, by the
" moderation of the lender, to the value of a thousand
" crowns.

Cleanthes. A plague choke him with his moderation, for a scoundrel and cut-throat rascal as he is ! Was there ever such extortion heard of ! And he is not satisfied with the cruel interest he demands, but he must still force me to take the beggarly old lumber he has heaped together, at the rate of three thousand livres ? I shan't make two hundred crowns of the whole ; and yet for all this, I must even resolve to agree to his terms ; for he is in a condition to make me accept any thing ; the villain has me at his mercy.

La Fleche. Sir, without offence, you are exactly in the high road which Panurge took to be ruined ; getting money advanced, buying dear, selling cheap, and eating your corn in the blade.

Cleanthes. What wouldst thou have me to do ? See what young fellows are reduced to by the cursed avarice of fathers ! Can one be astonished, after this, that their children wish them dead ?

La Fleche. I must confess that yours would incense the calmest man in the world against his villany : I have not, heaven be praised, inclinations strongly bent towards hanging ; and amongst my comrades, whom I see dabbling pretty much in the small-craft way, I have dexterity to draw my neck out of the halter, and disentangle myself from all gallantries which taste ever so little of the gallows ; but, to say the truth, he would even tempt

me by his proceedings to rob him ; and I should think, in robbing him, I did a meritorious action.

Cleanthes. Give me that inventory a little, that I may look it over again.

SCENE II.

HARPAGON, MR. SIMON, CLEANTHES,
LA FLECHE at the farther part of the stage.

MR. SIMON.

YES, Sir, it is a young man in want of money : his affairs force him to take it up, and he'll stick at nothing you prescribe him.

Harpagon. But do you believe, Mr. Simon, there is no hazard run in this case ? And do you know the name, the estate and the family of him you speak for ?

Mr. Simon. No, I can't well let you thoroughly into that ; and it was only by chance I was directed to him ; but you will be made acquainted with every thing by himself ; and his man assured me that you would be satisfied when you came to know him. All I can tell you, is, that his family is rich, that he has no mother, and that he will give bond, if you insist upon it, that his father shall die before eight months are over.

Harpagon. That is something, indeed. Charity, Mr. Simon, obliges us to gratify people when it is in our power.

Mr. Simon. That's to be supposed.

[La Fleche low to Cleanthes, seeing Mr. Simon.]
What is the meaning of this ? Our Mr. Simon in discourse with your father !

Cleanthes low to La Fleche.] Can they have informed him who I am? and dost thou betray me?

Mr. Simon to La Fleche.] Hah! you are in mighty haste! Who told you this was the house? [To Harpagon.] It was none of me, Sir, however, who discovered to them your name and your lodging; but in my opinion there is no great harm in it; they are discreet people, and here you may explain to one another.

Harpagon. How!

Mr. Simon pointing to Cleanthes.] This is the gentleman who would borrow the fifteen thousand livres of you, that I was speaking of.

Harpagon. How, Sirrah, is it you that abandon yourself to these culpable extremities?

Cleanthes. How, father, is it you that descend to these base actions?

[Mr. Simon makes off, and La Fleche goes to hide himself.]

SCENE III.

HARPAGON, CLEANTHES.

HARPAGON.

IS it you who would ruin yourself, by such rascally borrowings?

Cleanthes. Is it you who seek to enrich yourself by such villanous usury?

Harpagon. Dar'lt thou, after this, appear before me?

Cleanthes. Dare you, after this, shew yourself to the world?

Harpagon. Are you not ashamed, pray, to descend to these debaucheries? to run headlong into horrible ex-

pences, and scandalously squander that substance, which your ancestors have amassed for you with the sweat of their brows?

Cleanthes. Don't you blush to disgrace your rank by the trade you drive? to sacrifice honour and reputation to the insatiable desire of heaping crown upon crown, and to outdo, in point of interest, the most infamous subtilties that ever were invented by the most notorious usurers?

Harpagon. Begone out of my sight, rascal, begone out of my sight.

Cleanthes. Who think you is the greater criminal, he who hires the money he really wants, or he, forsooth, who pilfers the money he has no manner of use for?

Harpagon. Hence, I say, and don't torment my ears—
[Exit Cleanthes.] I'm not at all sorry for this adventure, it will be a warning to me, to keep a stricter eye than ever upon all his actions.

SCENE IV.

FROSINA, HARPAGON.

FROSINA.

SIR,

Harpagon. Stay a moment, I'll come back and talk with you presently — [Aside.] It is proper I should make a short trip to my money.

SCENE

SCENE V.

LA FLECHE, FROSINA.

LA FLECHE not seeing Frosina.

THE adventure is droll to the last degree. He must certainly have a large magazine of goods, in one place or other; for there is not one thing in the inventory ever came to our knowledge.

Frosina. [Seeing him.] Had is it you, my poor La Fleche! how happens this meeting?

La Fleche. Hah! hah! is it you, Frosina! what have you to do here?

Frosina. What I do every where else; to play the Go-between in affairs, make myself serviceable to people, and make the best advantage I possibly can of the small talents I am possessed of. You know that in this world we must live by address, and that heaven has given no other income but intrigue, and industry to such as I am.

La Fleche. Have you any business with the master of this house?

Frosina. Yes, I'm transacting a small affair for him, for which I expect a reward.

La Fleche. From him? Ay, faith, you'll be very subtle if you extract any thing from thence; and I must tell you that money is wonderous scarce in this house.

Frosina. There are certain services which are marvelously engaging.

La Fleche. I'm your most obedient; and you don't as yet know signior Harpagon. Signior Harpagon is a

human creature, of all human creatures the least humane; a mortal of all mortals, the hardest, and most close-fisted. There is no service can pull his gratitude to the extremity of unclenching his hands. Of praise, esteem, kindness in words, and friendship as much as you please; but of money, not a sou. There is nothing more dry and withered than his favours and caresses; and *give* is a word for which he has conceived so strong an aversion, that he never says, *I give you* a good-morrow, but *I lend you* a good-morrow.

Frosina. I'gad I've the art of milking men. I've the secret of introducing myself into their affections; of tickling their hearts, to find on which side they are the most sensible.

La Fleche. All stuff here! I defy you to melt the man we are speaking of, on the side of money. He is a Turk on that head, but of a disposition so Turkish, as to make all the world despair; ye may burst him before ye can move him; in a word, he loves money more than reputation, honour, and virtue, and the sight of a person who has any demands upon him, throws him into convulsions; this wounds him in the mortal part; pierces him to the heart, tears out his very entrails; and if—but he returns; I must be gone. [*Exit La Fleche.*]

SCENE VI.

HARPAGON, FROSINA.

HARPAGON *aside*.

EVERY thing is as it should be — [aloud] Well, what's the business, Frosina?

Frosina. Bless me ! what a constitution is there ! why you are the very picture of health.

Harpagon. Who, I ?

Frosina. Never did I see you look so fresh and jolly.

Harpagon. Indeed ?

Frosina. How indeed ? You were never so young in your life as you are now : I see fellows of five and twenty, who are older than you.

Harpagon. For all that, Frosina, I am some three-score good.

Frosina. Well, what's that ? three-score ! here's a po'ther indeed ! 'Tis the very flower of one's age, and you are now entering upon the prime season of man.

Harpagon. 'Tis true ; but twenty years less, though, would do me no harm, I believe.

Frosina. You joke sure. You've no need o't, you're temper'd to last a hundred years.

Harpagon. Do you think so ?

Frosina. Most certainly ; you have all the marks of it. Stay a little. Ha ! There is a token for you of long life, just between your two eyes.

Harpagon. Are you skill'd that way ?

Frosina. Certainly. Shew me your hand. Mercy o' me ! what a line of life's there !

Harpagon. What mean ye ?

Frosina. Don't you see what a vast way that line goes ?

Harpagon. Well ; what does that signify ?

Frosina. O' my conscience, I said a hundred years, but you'll weather above six score.

Harpagon. Is it possible ?

Frosina. You must be knock'd on the head, I tell

you ; you'll live to bury your children, and your children's children.

Harpagon. So much the better. How goes our affair ?

Frosina. Need you ask ? Does any body see me meddle with a thing I don't bring to bear ? I've above all, a wonderous talent at match-making. There an't two people in the world that I can't find ways and means to couple in a trice ; and I believe if I once took it into my head, I could marry the Great Turk with the republic of Venice — but there was not, be sure, such great difficulty in this affair. As I'm very intimate with them, I've had deep discourse with them both about you : I told the mother the design you had upon Mariana, having seen her pass along the street, and taking the air at her window.

Harpagon. Who made answer —

Frosina. She received the proposal with joy ; and when I assur'd her, that you were very desirous her daughter should assist this evening at the marriage contract, which is to be sign'd in relation to yours, she readily consented to it, and for this purpose has trusted her to my care.

Harpagon. The thing is, Frosina, that I'm obliged to give signior Anselm a supper ; and I should be glad she'd partake of the treat.

Frosina. You're in the right on't. After dinner she'll pay your daughter a visit, from whence she intends to take a turn to the fair, and so return to supper.

Harpagon. Very well, they shall go together in my coach which I'll lend them.

Frosina. That will suit her exactly.

Harpagon. But, Frosina, hast thou talk'd to the mother about the portion she can give her daughter ? have

you told her she must give some assistance herself, that she must strive a little, and bleed upon such an occasion as this? For I tell you again, no-body marries a girl except she brings something with her.

Frosina. How something? She's one will bring you in a clear thousand pounds *per annum*.

Harpagon. A thousand pounds *per annum*?

Frosina. Yes. *Imprimis*, She has been nursed, and reared in great scantiness of feeding. She's a girl has been used to live upon fallad, milk, cheese, and apples; and consequently there will be no need, on her account, of a table well served up, nor your exquisite jellies, nor your peel'd barley at every turn, nor any other delicacies that another woman must have; and this is not such a trifling matter, but it will amount to two hundred pounds *per annum*, at least. *Item*, She has no curiosity for any thing beyond decency with great plainness, and loves none of your magnificent dresses, nor rich jewels, nor sumptuous furniture, which such persons as she run into with so great eagerness; and this article is worth more than three hundred pounds a year. *Item*, She has a horrible aversion to play, which is not common with the ladies now-a-days; and I know one of them in our neighbourhood who has lost two thousand pounds this year. But let's only take one fourth of that; five hundred pounds, and three hundred pounds in clothes and jewels, that makes eight hundred pounds: and two hundred pounds which we reckon for eating, is not there your thousand pounds a year, hard money?

Harpagon. Yes, that's not amiss; but this computation has nothing real in it.

Frosina. Excuse me. Is it nothing real, to bring you in marriage great sobriety; the paternal estate of a great

love for simplicity of dress, and an acquir'd estate of great hatred of play?

Harpagon. 'Tis mere jest, to pretend to make me up her portion out of all the expences she won't put me to; I shan't go to give an acquittance for what I've never receiv'd; I must absolutely have the feeling of something.

Frosina. Lack-a-day! You shall feel enough. I have heard them talk of a certain country where they have effects, of which you will be master.

Harpagon. I must see that. But, Frosina, there is one thing more which gives me uneasiness. The girl is young, as you may see; young people generally love none but those like themselves, and covet only such company. I'm afraid a man of my age will not hit her taste; and that this may produce some little disorders in my family, that would not by any means be agreeable to me.

Frosina. How little do you know her! This is another particularity in her which I was to acquaint you with; she has a terrible aversion to all young folks, and loves none but your old gentry.

Harpagon. She!

Frosina. Yes, she. I wish you had heard her but talk upon this head. She cannot bear the sight of a young fellow at all. But she is never more ravish'd, she says, than when she can get sight of a fine old man with a venerable beard; the oldest have, with her, the greatest charms, and I warn you not to go make yourself younger than you are; she would have a man sixty at the least; and 'tis not four months ago, that, being upon the point of marriage, she broke the match sheer off, on account of her spark's having discover'd that he

was only fifty-six years of age, and used not spectacles to sign the contract.

Harpagon. Only on that account?

Frosina. Yes. She says fifty-six years will not satisfy her; and that, of all things, she's for a nose that wears spectacles.

Harpagon. Verily, you tell me something altogether new.

Frosina. This matter is carry'd farther than one can express. One sees several pictures and prints in her chamber. But what would you imagine they are? Your Adonis's? your Cephalus's? your Paris's? and your Apollo's? No. Your handsome portraits of Saturn, of king Priam, of old Nestor, and good sire Anchises upon his son's shoulders.

Harpagon. That's admirable! This is what I should never have dream'd of; and I'm not a little pleas'd to find she's of this humour. In troth, had I been a woman, I should never have lov'd young fellows.

Frosina. I verily believe it. Pretty sort of trumpe-ry indeed, your young fellows, to be in love with! These pretty boys with bibs, these fine sparks that are to be admir'd for their complexion! I should be very glad to know what relish there is in one of them.

Harpagon. For my part, I can't comprehend it, and I can't imagine how it is, that there are women who are so fond of them.

Frosina. They must be stark fools. To think youth amiable! Have people common sense that do it? Are they men, these same young beaux? And can people be ty'd to such animals as these?

Harpagon. That's what I always say, with their effeminate voice, and their three little bits of a beard turn'd

up like a cat's whiskers, their toupee wigs, their flowing breeches, and their breasts open.

Frosina. They are finely made, truly, when compar'd with a person like yourself! There's something like a man! There's what will gratify the eye! This is the make and dress to inspire love.

Harpagon. Do you think me tolerably to pass?

Frosina. Do I? You are ravishing, and your picture ought to be drawn. Turn a little if you please; it is impossible to be better — let me see you walk. Here's a body, tall, free, and degagee as it ought to be, and that discovers not the least imperfection.

Harpagon. I have no great ones, thank heaven. There's only my catarrh that seizes me from time to time.

Frosina. That's nothing at all: your catarrh by no means sits ill upon you; and you cough with a grace.

Harpagon. Tell me a little. Has not Mariana seen me yet? Has she not minded me as I passed by?

Frosina. No, no: but we had a great deal of discourse about your person: and I was not wanting in setting forth your merit, and the advantage it would be to her, to have such a one as you.

Harpagon. You did mighty well, and I thank you for it.

Frosina. But, Sir, I have a small request to make to you — I have a law-suit, that I'm in great danger of losing for want of a little money, [Harpagon looks grave.] and you could easily gain me this suit, had you the least kindness for me — You can't think the pleasure she'll have to see you! [He resumes a gay air.] How you will please her! What an admirable effect will that antique ruff of yours have upon her fancy! But of all things she'll be charm'd with your breeches tag'd to your

doublet with hooks and eyes. That makes her downright dote on you: a hook and eye-lover will be a most wonderful regale for her.

Harpagon. Troth, you put me in raptures by this talk.

Frosina. Really, Sir, this law suit is absolutely of the last consequence to me. [Harpagon looks grave again.] I'm undone if I lose it; and some small assistance would retrieve my affairs. — I would you had but seen the rapture she was in to hear me speak of you. [Harpagon looks gay again.] Joy sparkled in her eyes at the recital of your good qualities; and I threw her in short into the utmost impatience, to see this match fully concluded.

Harpagon. Thou hast done me an exceeding kind office, Frosina; and I confess I have all the obligations in the world to thee.

Frosina. I beseech you, Sir, grant me the small assistance I request of you. [Harpagon looks serious.] It will set me on my legs again, and I should be eternally obliged to you for it.

Harpagon. Adieu. I'll go finish my dispatches.

Frosina. I do assure you, Sir, you can never relieve me in a greater necessity.

Harpagon. I'll give orders for my coach to be ready to carry you to the fair.

Frosina. I would not importune you thus, were I not forced to it by necessity.

Harpagon. And I'll take care you shall sup early, that you may not be sick after it.

Frosina. Don't refuse me the favour I solicit from you. You can't imagine, Sir, the pleasure that —

Harpagon. I must begone. There they call me. Farewel, 'till by and by.

Frosina alone.] A plague on thee, the de'el take thee

for a covetous cur. The hunks was proof against all my attacks : but I must not quit this business however ; for I've t'other side let what will happen, whence I'm sure of getting a good reward.

ACT III. SCENE I.

HARPAGON, CLEANTHES, ELIZA, VALERE, Dame CLAUDE with a broom in her hand, Mr. JAMES, BRINDAVOINE, LA MERLUCHE.

HARPAGON.

HERE, come hither all of you, that I may distribute to you the orders of the day, and regulate your several employments. A little nearer, Dame Claude. To begin with you. Good, you are ready arm'd there. The care of cleaning out every thing I commit to you : and above all, take care not to rub the furniture too hard for fear of wearing it out. Furthermore, I assign to you the government of the bottles, during supper ; and if any one is missing, or any thing is broke, I shall look to you for it, and abate it out of your wages.

Mr. James aside.] A politic punishment.

Harpagon to Dame Claude.] Go.

SCENE II.

HARPAGON, CLEANTHES, ELIZA, VALERE, Mr. JAMES, BRINDAVOINE, LA MERLUCHE.

HARPAGON.

YOU Brindavoine, and you Merluche, I confirm you

in the charge of rinsing the glasses, and serving the wine; but only when one is thirsty, and not in the manner of some of your impertinent footmen who must provoke people, and put it in their heads to drink, when they don't dream on't. Wait till they call for it again and again, and remember always to mix a great deal of water with it.

Mr. James aside.] Yes, for all-wine gets into the head.

La Merluche. Shall we throw off our canvas frocks, Sir?

Harpagon. Yes, when you see the guests coming; and take special care not to spoil your clothes.

Brindavoin. You very well know, Sir, that one of the fore-flaps of my doublet is cover'd with one great blotch of lamp-oil.

La Merluche. And I, Sir, have my breeches so slit behind, that, saving your presence, one may see my—

Harpagon. Peace, turn that side dextrously towards the wall, and always show your fore-part to the world. [Harpagon holds his hat before his doublet, to shew Brindavoin how he should hide the blotch of oil.] And you, always hold your hat in this fashion, when you serve at table.

SCENE III.

HARPAGON, CLEANTHES, ELIZA,
VALERE, Mr. JAMES.

HARPAGON.

AS for you, daughter, you'll have an eye upon what is taken away, and take care there be no manner of waste. That's very becoming young women. But in the

mean time prepare yourself to receive my mistress handsomely, who is to pay you a visit, and attend her to the fair. Do you hear what I say to you?

Eliza. Yes, father.

SCENE IV.

HARPAGON, CLEANTHES, VALERE,
Mr. JAMES.

HARPAGON. V

AND you my fop of a son, whom I was so good as to forgive the late story; don't you go take it into your head no more than she, to make four faces.

Cleantes. I four faces, father; and for what reason?

Harpagon. Come, come, we know the skit of children, whose fathers marry again; and with what eye they use to look upon what they call a mother-in-law. But if you wish I should lose all remembrance of your last prank, I recommend to you, above all things, the entertaining this same person with a chearful countenance, and to give her in short, the handsomest reception you possibly can.

Cleantes. To tell you the truth, father, I can by no means promise you to be well pleas'd, she should become my mother-in-law. I should lye, if I told you so: but as for what concerns the receiving her handsomely, and looking upon her chearfully, I do promise upon that head most punctually to obey you.

Harpagon. Take care of that, at least.

Cleantes. You shall see, you shan't have the least reason to complain of that.

Harpagon. You will do wisely.

SCENE V.

HARPAGON, VALERE, Mr. JAMES.

HARPAGON.

VALERE, your assistance in this business — So ho !
Master James, come hither, I reserv'd you for the last.

Mr. James. Is it your coachman, Sir, or belike your
cook, you would speak to ? For I am both one and t'other.

Harpagon. 'Tis to both of them.

Mr. James. But to which of them first ?

Harpagon. To the cook.

Mr. James. Stay then, if you please.

[Takes off his coachman's long great-coat, and appears
drest as a cook.]

Harpagon. What the deuce o' ceremony's this ?

Mr. James. You've nothing to do but say on.

Harpagon. I've engag'd myself, master James, to give
a supper to-night.

Mr. James aside.] Most miraculous !

Harpagon. Tell me now, will you give us good cheer ?

Mr. James. Yes, if you'll give me a good deal of
money.

Harpagon. What a pox ! always money ! I think
they have nothing else to say ; money, money, money.
Not a word else in their mouth but money. Always
talking of money. The burden of the song is money.

Valere. I never heard an answer more impertinent
than that. A pretty sort of rarity, to make good cheer
with a good deal of money ! 'Tis the easiest thing in
the world ; and any poor contriver would do full as
much ; but to act like a man of skill, you must tell me
of making good cheer with little money.

Mr. James. Good cheer with little money?

Valere. Yes.

Mr. James to Valere.] I' good troth, Mr. Steward, you'll oblige us by letting us into this secret, and taking my place of cook! You are so meddlesome here to make yourself the factotum.

Harpagon. Hold your tongue. What must we have?

Mr. James. There's Mr. Steward, Sir, will make you good cheer for a little money.

Harpagon. Heh! 'Tis my pleasure that you answer me.

Mr. James. How many will there be of you at table?

Harpagon. We shall be eight or ten: but you need only take them at eight. When there's victuals enough for eight, there's enough in reason for ten.

Valere. That's to be suppos'd.

Mr. James. Well then, we must have four large soups, and five small dishes between: soups — Small dishes —

Harpagon. S'heart, here's enough to treat a whole town from one end to th'other.

Mr. James. Roast-meat —

Harpagon clapping his hand upon his mouth.] Ha! traitor, thou art eating up all I'm worth.

Mr. James. Intermeffes —

Harpagon. What, again?

[Clapping his hand again upon his mouth.

Valere to Mr. James.] Have you a mind to burst them all, and has my master invited people to murder them by mere force of cramming? Go, go and read a little the rules of health; ask the physicians whether there is any thing so prejudicial to men, as eating to excess.

Harpagon. He's in the right.

Valere. Learn, master James, you, and such as you, that a table overcharg'd with victual is a cut-throat;

that to shew yourselves true friends of those we invite, 'tis necessary frugality should reign through the whole repast; and that according to the saying of one of the ancients, "We must eat to live, and not live to eat."

Harpagon. Ah! 'twas excellently said! Come, and let me hug thee for that word. It is one of the finest sentences I ever heard in my life. "We must live to eat, and not eat to li—" No, that is not it. How was it you said?

Valere. "That we must eat to live, and not live to eat."

Harpagon to-Mr. James.] Right; [to Valere] harkee, who is the great man that said that?

Valere. I don't recal his name at present.

Harpagon. Remember to write out those words for me; I'll have them grav'd in letters of gold over my hall chimney.

Valere. I won't fail. And as to your supper, you need only leave it to me. I'll order all that matter just as it should be.

Harpagon. Do then.

Mr. James. So much the better; I shall have the less trouble about it.

Harpagon to Valere.] There must be such things as people can't eat much of, and that cloy them immediately; some good pease-porridge pretty fat, with a pye in a pot well garnish'd with chesnuts, a — let there be abundance of that.

Valere. Trust you to me.

Harpagon. Now, Mr. James, you must go clean my coach.

Mr. James. Hold. This is directed to the coachman. [He puts on his coachman's great-coat.] You say —

Harpagon. That you must clean my coach, and get my horses ready to drive to the fair with —

Mr. James. Your horses, Sir? troth they're not in a condition for stirring any where. I won't tell you that they are down on their litter, for the poor beasts have none to lie upon, and it were an improper way of speaking: but you make them keep such austere fasts, that they are nothing but phantoms, or shadows of horses.

Harpagon. They're mighty ill indeed; they do nothing.

Mr. James. And because they do nothing, Sir, must they eat nothing? It would be much better for them, poor souls, to work a great deal, and eat accordingly. It breaks my very heart to see them grown so thin; for in short, I have a tender affection for my horses, that, methinks, when I see them suffer, 'tis my own self; not a day passes but I take the meat out of my own mouth to feed them; and 'tis a barbarous temper, Sir, to have no compassion on our neighbour.

Harpagon. It will be no great labour, just to go to the fair.

Mr. James. No, Sir, I han't the heart to drive them, 'twould go against my conscience to give them a lash with the whip, in the condition they are. How would you have them drag the coach, when they can't drag themselves along?

Valere. Sir, I'll oblige our neighbour, le Picard, to take upon him to drive them: he'll be of great use to us, besides, in getting ready the supper.

Mr. James. With all my heart. I'd much rather too they should die under the hand of another, than under mine.

Valere. Mr. James mightily affects being considerate.

Mr. James. Mr. Steward mightily affects being necessary.

Harpagon. Ha' done.

Mr. James. Sir, I can't endure flatterers; and I see

that all he does, his perpetual prying into the bread and wine, the wood, the salt and candle, is for nothing but to curry favour with you, and make his court to you. This makes me mad ; and I am griev'd to hear daily what people say of you ; for in short I find I have a great kindness for you, in spite of me ; and, next to my horses, you are the person I love most.

Harpagon. Might I know of you, Mr. James, what it is people say of me ?

Mr. James. Yes, Sir, if I were but sure it would not anger you.

Harpagon. No, not in the least.

Mr. James. Excuse me ; I know very well I should put you in a passion.

Harpagon. Not at all ; on the contrary it will oblige me ; and I'm glad to hear what the world says of me.

Mr. James. Sir, since you will have it, I tell you frankly, that people every where make a jest of you ; that they pelt us with a thousand jokes from every quarter, on your account ; that they are never more delighted than when they have caught you at an advantage, and make stories without end of your sordid tricks : one says, you have almanacs printed on purpose, wherein you double the ember weeks, and vigils, to take advantage of the fasts you oblige your folks to. Another that you have a quarrel always ready to pick with your servants at quarter-days, or when they leave you, to find a pretence to give them nothing. There, one tells a story, that once upon a time you ordered a cat of one of your neighbours, to be cited *coram nobis*, for having eat up the remains of a leg of mutton. Here another, that you were caught one night a stealing, your own self, your horses oats, and that your coachman, who was my

predecessor, gave you, in the dark, I don't know how many thwacks of a cudgel, of which you were not pleased to make one word of mention. In short, would you have me speak out? One can go to no place where one does not hear people play you off: you are the town-talk, the laughing-stock of all the world, and one never hears you spoke of, but under the name of miser, curmudgeon, niggard, and extortioner.

Harpagon. beating him.] You're a numscul, a rascal, a scoundrel, and an impertinent puppy.

Mr. James. Mighty well; did I not guess how it would be? You would not believe me. I told you plainly that I should put you in a passion by telling you the truth.

Harpagon. Learn then how to speak.

SCENE VI.

MR. JAMES, VALERE.

VALERE laughing.

AS far as I can see, Mr. James, they reward your frankness but scurvily.

Mr. James. S'death, Mr. Upstart, who affect the man of consequence, 'tis none of your business; laugh at your own cudgelling when you get it, and don't come here to laugh at mine.

Valere. Dear Mr. master James, don't put yourself in a passion, I beseech you.

Mr. James aside.] He sneaks; I'll pretend to be valiant, and if he's fool enough to be afraid of me, I'll drub him a little. [Aloud.] Do you know very well, Mr. Grinner, that I don't laugh myself; and that if you pro-

voke me, I shall make you laugh in another manner.

[Mr. James pushes Valere to the farther end of the stage, threatening him.]

Valere. Gently!

Mr. James. How, gently? suppose I've no mind to't?

Valere. Good Sir!

Mr. James. You're an impertinent fellow.

Valere. Mr. Master James.

Mr. James. There's no such person as Mr. Master James twice over. If I take a stick to ye, I shall tann your hide, with your importance.

Valere. How, a stick! [Valere driving him back.]

Mr. James. Hey! no. I'm not speaking of that.

Valere. Do you know, Mr. Numscul, that I can tann your hide?

Mr. James. I don't doubt it.

Valere. That, when all's done and said, you are nothing but a scrub of a cook?

Mr. James. I know it very well.

Valere. And that you don't know me as yet?

Mr. James. Pardon me.

Valere. You will tann my hide, you said?

Mr. James. I spoke it in jest.

Valere. And I've no manner of relish for your jesting. [Cudgels him.] Know that you are but a scurvy joker.

Mr. James alone.] Plague on sincerity, 'tis a wretched trade. Henceforward I renounce it, and will speak truth no more. Then, as to my master, let it pass, he has some right to beat me: but for this Mr. Steward, I'll be reveng'd on him, if I can.

SCENE VII.

FROSINA, MARIANA, Mr. JAMES.

FROSINA.

DO you know, Mr. James, whether your master is within?

Mr. James. Yes, troth, he is; I know it but too well.

Frosina. Tell him, pray, that we are here.

SCENE VIII.

MARIANA, FROSINA.

MARIANA.

AH! Frosina, what a strange way am I in! If I must speak what I feel, how terribly am I apprehensive of this interview!

Frosina. But why so? What is it disquiets you?

Mariana. Alas! do you ask it? And can't you imagine with yourself the alarms of a person just entering upon a view of the rack on which she is to be fixed?

Frosina. I see plainly that to die agreeably, Harpagon is not the rack you would willingly embrace; and I know by your countenance, that the young spark you were speaking to me of, comes afresh into your head.

Mariana. Yes, Frosina, 'tis what I don't pretend to deny: the respectful visits he paid at our house, have made, I confess, some impression upon my mind.

Frosina. But have you learn'd who he is?

Mariana. No, I don't know who he is; but I know he is form'd with an air to inspire love; that if matters

could be referred to my choice, I should take him before another; and that he contributes not a little to raise in me a horrible dread of the husband you would impose upon me.

Frosina. Lack-a-day, these young sparks are all agreeable enough, and play their part very well; but most of them are poor as rats, and it would suit you much better to take an old man, who'll make you a good settlement. I grant you, that the senses will not find their account quite so well on the side I speak of, and that there are certain disgusts must be endur'd with such a husband; but this is not to last long: and, believe me, his death will soon put you in a condition for taking one more amiable, who will make amends for all.

Mariana. Bless me, Frosina, 'tis a strange affair, when, to be happy, we must wish, or wait for somebody's death; and death will not second all the projects we're pleas'd to set on foot.

Frosina. You joke sure! You are not to marry him but on condition of leaving you very soon a widow; this ought to be one of the articles of the marriage contract. It would be down-right impertinent not to die in three months. But here he comes in his proper person.

Mariana. Ah! Frosina! what a figure is there!

SCENE IX.

HARPAGON, MARIANA, FROSINA.

HARPAGON to Mariana.

BE not offended, fair one, if I approach you with my spectacles on. I know that your charms strike the eye sufficiently, are visible enough of themselves, and

that there is no need of glasses to discover them ; but in short, 'tis with glasses we observe the stars ; and I do maintain and uphold that you are a star, but a star, the fairest star that is in the whole country of stars.—Frosina, she answers not a word, nor does she discover, as I perceive, the least joy at the sight of me.

Frosina. 'Tis because she is yet all surprize : and then maids are always aſham'd of declaring, at first ſight, what they have in their thoughts.

Harpagon. You're right. [to Mariana.] Here is my daughter, pretty dearee, come to wait upon you.

SCENE X.

HARPAGON, ELIZA, MARIANA, FROSINA.

MARIANA.

I'M of the lateſt, madam, in acquiting myſelf of ſuch a viſit.

Eliza. You've done that, madam, which I ought to have done, and it was my place to have been before-hand with you.

Harpagon. You ſee what a great girl ſhe is : but ill weeds always ſprout up apace.

Mariana aſide to Frosina.] O the nauſeous fellow !

Harpagon to Frosina.] What ſays my pretty one ?

Frosina. That ſhe likes you to admiration.

Harpagon. 'Tis too much honour you do me, adorable darling.

Mariana aſide.] What an animal !

Harpagon. I'm over-oblig'd to you for theſe ſentiments.

Mariana aſide.] I can hold no longer.

SCENE XI.

HARPAGON, MARIANA, ELIZA, CLEANTHES,
VALERE, FROSINA, BRINDAVOINE.

HARPAGON.

HERE is my son too, who comes to pay his duty to you.

Mariana aside to Frosina.] Ah! Frosina, what an accident! 'Tis the very person I spoke to you about.

Frosina to Mariana.] The adventure is wonderful.

Harpagon. I see you're astonish'd to see me have children so big: but I shall soon get rid of them both.

Cleanthes to Mariana.] Madam, to tell you the truth, this here is an adventure, which I by no means expected; and my father did not a little surprize me, when he told me just now the design he had form'd.

Mariana. I can say the same. 'Tis an accident unforeseen, which has surpriz'd me as much as you; and I was not prepar'd for such an adventure.

Cleanthes. It is true, madam, my father could not make a handsomer choice; and that the honour of seeing you is a sensible joy to me; but for all this, I will not assure you that I am glad of the design you may have of becoming my mother-in-law. The compliment, I own to you, is too difficult for me, and this is a title, begging your pardon, which I don't wish you. This discourse will appear brutal in the eyes of certain people; but I am assur'd, you are one who will look on it as you should do; a marriage, madam, which you will easily imagine I ought to have an aversion to; that you are not ignorant, as knowing what I am, how much it

clashes with my interest ; and that, in short, you are willing I should tell you, with my father's permission, that if things depend upon me, this match should not go forward.

Harpagon. A very impertinent sort of compliment this ! What a fine confession to make the lady !

Mariana. And, for myself, in answer, I can tell you things are very even ; and that if you should have an aversion to see me your mother-in-law, I should have no less, doubtless, to see you my son-in-law. Don't think, I beseech you, that the giving you this uneasiness is of my seeking. I should be very sorry to occasion you any vexation ; and if I don't find myself forc'd by an absolute power, I give you my word, I won't consent to the match which chagrines you.

Harpagon. She's in the right on't. A silly compliment must be answered in the same way ; I ask your pardon, pretty one, for the impertinence of my son ; he's a young puppy who don't yet know the consequence of what he says.

Mariana. I give you my word that what he has said to me, has by no means been offensive to me ; on the contrary he has done me a pleasure by explaining thus his real sentiments. I like a confession of this kind from him ; and had he spoke in another manner, I should have esteem'd him much less.

Harpagon. 'Tis great goodness in you, to be willing thus to excuse his faults. Time will make him wiser, and you will see that he'll change his sentiments.

Cleanthes. No, Sir, I am not capable of changing them ; and I most earnestly desire the lady to believe so.

Harpagon. Do but see what extravagance is here ! He persists still stronger.

Cleanthes.

Cleanthes. Would you have me belye my heart?

Harpagon. Again! have you a mind to change the discourse?

Cleanthes. Well, since you will have me talk in another strain, suffer me, madam, to put myself here in the place of my father; and let me protest to you, that I never saw any thing in the world so charming as yourself; that I can conceive nothing equal to the happiness of pleasing you; and that the title of your husband is a glory, a felicity, which I would prefer to the destiny of the greatest princes upon earth. Yes, madam, the happiness of possessing you is, in my regard, the fairest of all fortunes; 'tis what I would fix my whole ambition upon. There is nothing I should not be capable of doing for so valuable a conquest, and the most powerful obstacles —

Harpagon. Softly, son, if you please.

Cleanthes. 'Tis a compliment I make the lady for you.

Harpagon. O dear! I've a tongue to explain myself, and have no need of such an interpreter, as you — Here, bring chairs.

Frosina. No, 'twill be better for us to go directly to the fair, that we may return the sooner, and have the whole time afterwards to entertain ourselves.

Harpagon to Brindavoine.] Put the horses to the coach then.

SCENE XII.

HARPAGON, MARIANA, ELIZA, CLEANTHES,
VALERE, FROSINA.

HARPAGON to Mariana.

I B E G you'll excuse me, sweet-heart, if I have not thought to give you a small collation before you set out.

Cleanthes. I have provided one, father, and have order'd hither some plates of China oranges, citrons, and sweet-meats, which I sent for on your account.

Harpagon aside to Valere.] Valere.

Valere to Harpagon.] He's out of his wits.

Cleanthes. Don't you think this enough, father? The lady will please be so good to excuse it.

Mariana. 'Twas not by any means necessary.

Cleanthes. Did you ever see, madam, a diamond more lively than that you see my father has upon his finger?

Mariana. Indeed it sparkles very much.

Cleanthes taking the diamond off his father's finger and giving it to Mariana.] You should look upon it a little nearer.

Mariana. It is a very fine one, indeed; it casts a great lustre.

Cleanthes steps before Mariana, who would restore it.] No, madam, 'tis in hands too agreeable. 'Tis a present my father makes you.

Harpagon. I?

Cleanthes. Is it not true, Sir, that you've a mind the lady should keep it for your sake?

Harpagon aside to his son.] How?

Cleanthes. A pretty question indeed! [to Mariana.] He makes signs to me that I should force you to accept it.

Mariana. I would not —

Cleanthes to Mariana.] You are in the wrong; he don't care to take it again.

Harpagon aside.] I shall run mad.

Mariana. 'Twould be —

Cleanthes hindering Mariana from returning it.] No, I tell you, it will affront him.

Mariana. Pray —

Cleanthes. By no means.

Harpagon aside.] Plague take —

Cleanthes. He is perfectly shock'd at your refusal.

Harpagon low to his son.] Ah, traitor!

Cleanthes to Mariana.] You see he's beyond all patience.

Harpagon aside to his son threatening him.] Villain as thou art!

Cleanthes. It is not my fault, father; I do all I can to oblige her to keep it; but she is resolute.

Harpagon aside to his son in a rage.] Scoundrel!

Cleanthes. You are the cause, madam, of my father's quarrelling with me.

Harpagon aside to his son with the same four looks.] Rascal!

Cleanthes to Mariana.] You'll throw him into fits. For goodness sake, madam, withstand it no longer.

Frosina to Mariana.] Lack-a-day! What ceremony is here! Keep the ring, since the gentleman will have it so.

Mariana to Harpagon.] Not to put you in a passion, I shall keep it for the present, and shall take another opportunity to restore it.

SCENE XIII.

HARPAGON, MARIANA, ELIZA, CLEANTHES,
VALERE, FROSINA, BRINDAVOINE.

BRINDAVOINE.

SIR, here's a man wants to speak with you.

Harpagon. Tell him I'm busy, and bid him come again another time.

Brindavoine. He says he brings you some money.

Harpagon to Mariana.] I beg your pardon. I shall be back presently.

SCENE XIV.

HARPAGON, MARIANA, ELIZA, CLEANTHES,
VALERE, FROSINA, LA MERLUCHE.

La Merluche comes running, and throws Harpagon down.

SIR ———

Harpagon. Oh! I'm kill'd!

Cleanthes. What's the matter, father? Have you hurt yourself?

Harpagon. The rascal has certainly taken money of my debtors to break my neck.

Valere to Harpagon.] There's no harm done —

La Merluche to Harpagon.] Sir, I beg your pardon, I thought I did right to come in haste.

Harpagon. What dost thou come here for, hang-dog?

La Merluche. To tell you that both your horses are without their shoes.

Harpagon. Carry them to the smith then quickly.

Cleanthes. While we stay for their shoeing, I'll do the honours of the house, Sir, in your place, and conduct the lady into the garden, whither I shall order the collation to be carry'd.

SCENE XV.

HARPAGON, VALERE.

HARPAGON.

VALERE, have an eye a little upon all this, and pray take care to save me as much as you can, that we may send it the trades-people back again.

Valere. A word to the wife.

Harpagon. O rascal of a son! hast thou a mind to ruin me?

ACT IV. SCENE I.

CLEANTHES, MARIANA, ELIZA, FROSINA.

CLEANTHES.

LET us retire hither, we shall be much better. Here is not one suspicious person now left about us, and we may speak with freedom.

Eliza. Yes, madam, my brother has disclos'd to me the passion he entertains for you. I know the trouble and vexation such cross accidents as these are capable of producing; and 'tis, I assure you, with an extreme tenderness, that I interest myself in your adventure.

Mariana. It is a soothing consolation, to have such a one as you in one's interest; and I conjure you,

madam, ever to cherish this generous friendship for me, so capable of alleviating the rigours of fortune.

Frosina. In troth, you are both of you unlucky mortals, in not having let me into your affairs before all this. I should certainly have warded off this perplexing business, and should not have carry'd matters so far as they are.

Cleanthes. What would you ha' me do? My evil destiny would have it so. But, fair Mariana, what are your resolutions?

Mariana. Alas! am I in a capacity of making resolutions? and, dependent as I am, can I form any thing but wishes?

Cleanthes. Have I no support, in your affections but bare wishes? no officious pity? no relieving goodness? no active affection?

Mariana. What can I say to you? Put yourself in my place, and think what I can do. Be yourself both counsellor and disposer, I refer myself to you; and I believe you more reasonable than to require any thing of me, but what honour and decency will allow of.

Cleanthes. Alas! Whither do you reduce me, to refer you to what the peevish sentiments of a rigorous honour and scrupulous decency will allow.

Mariana. But what would you have me do? Though I could get over several punctilios to which our sex is oblig'd, I've a regard for my mother. She has always brought me up with an extreme tenderness; I can't bring myself to determine upon what will give her any uneasiness. Treat, transact the business with her: employ all your power to gain her over; you may do, and say every thing you please, I give you liberty; and if it only sticks at my declaring in your favour, I readily

consent to disclose to her my whole thoughts concerning you.

Cleantes. Frosina, dear Frosina, would you help us out?

Frosina. In good troth, need you ask it? I'd do't with all my soul. You know I am humane enough in my natural disposition. Heaven has not make my heart of brass; I've but too much tenderness of spirit in doing little offices, when I see people love one another in good earnest, and with honour. What could we do in this case?

Cleantes. Pr'ythee think of it a little.

Mariana. Give us some light.

Eliza. Trump up some invention to unravel what you have done.

Frosina to Mariana.] 'Tis difficult enough. As to your mother, she's not altogether unreasonable, and possibly one might gain her, and make her resolve to transfer to the son the gift she designs for the father. [To Cleantes.] But the mischief I find in it is, that your father is your father.

Cleantes. That's true.

Frosina. I mean that he'll bear malice, if we shew that we refuse him, and won't be in humour afterwards to give his consent to your marriage. We should order it, by right, that the refusal should come from himself; and endeavour to put him out of conceit with your person.

Cleantes. You're right.

Frosina. Yes, I am right, that I very well know. That's what ought to be done: but the deuce and all is to find ways and means — Stay — Suppose we had a woman something elderly, who should have my talents, and should act a part well enough to counterfeit a lady

of quality, by the help of a train made up in haste, and a whimsical name of marchioness, or viscountess, let's suppose of Lower-Britany; I should, by my address, work your father into a belief that she was a person very rich, having, besides houses, a hundred thousand crowns ready cash; that she was mortally in love with him, and wish'd to be marry'd to him so much, as to make over all she had to him by marriage-contract; why I don't doubt but he would lend an ear to the proposition: for in short, he loves you much, I'm sensible of it; but he loves his money a little more; and when, dazzled with this lure, he had once consented to what concerns you, it would signify little if afterwards he should be undeceiv'd, when he came to look more narrowly into the effects of our marchioness.

Cleantes. All this is very well contriv'd.

Frosina. Hold — I just now recollect a certain acquaintance of mine will do our business.

Cleantes. Depend upon my gratitude, Frosina, if you compass the affair: but first, my charming Mariana, let us, I beseech you, gain over your mother; and 'tis still doing a great deal, only to break off this marriage. I conjure you make all the efforts possible on your part. Make use of all the power which her fondness gives you. Display, without reserve, all those graces of eloquence, those all-powerful charms which heaven has placed in your eyes and lips; and pray forget not any of those tender expressions, those soft intreaties, and those moving caresses, to which I'm persuaded nothing can be refus'd.

Mariana. I'll do all I can in it, and let nothing slip me.

SCENE II.

HARPAGON, CLEANTHES, MARIANA,
ELIZA, FROSINA.

HARPAGON *aside and unseen.*

HEY! my son kisses the hand of his intended mother-in-law, and his intended mother-in-law does not much decline it. Should there be any mystery in this?

Eliza. There comes my father.

Harpagon. The coach is quite ready; you may set out when you please.

Cleanthes. Since you don't go, I'll conduct them myself.

Harpagon. No, stay: they may go very well by themselves; I have occasion for you.

SCENE III.

HARPAGON, CLEANTHES.

HARPAGON.

WELL, setting aside the consideration of a mother-in-law, what d'ye think of this person?

Cleanthes. What do I think of her?

Harpagon. Yes, of her air, her make, her beauty, her wit?

Cleanthes. So, so.

Harpagon. But speak out.

Cleanthes. To be frank with you, I did not find her what I once thought her. Her air is quite upon the coquette, her make awkward enough, her beauty very

indifferent, and her wit of the commonest kind. Don't think, father, 'tis to put you out of conceit with her : for, mother-in-law consider'd as mother-in-law, I like her as well as another.

Harpagon. And yet just now you told her —

Cleanthes. I did say some fine things to her in your name, but 'twas to please you.

Harpagon. So then, you should not have the least inclination for her ?

Cleanthes. I ? not at all.

Harpagon. I'm sorry for't ; for this balks me of a thought which came into my head. I was reflecting, when I saw her here, upon my age ; and was thinking with myself that people would find fault with my marrying a young girl. This consideration made me quit the design ; and as I have demanded her in marriage, and am engag'd to her by promise, I would have given her you, had you not discover'd such an aversion to her.

Cleanthes. To me ?

Harpagon. To you.

Cleanthes. In marriage ?

Harpagon. In marriage.

Cleanthes. Look'e, 'tis true she's not much to my taste : but to oblige you, father, I'll determine to marry her, if you please.

Harpagon. I ? I'm more reasonable than you think ; I won't force your inclination.

Cleanthes. Excuse me, I'll lay this force upon myself out of respect to you.

Harpagon. No, no ; marriage can never be happy where there is no inclination.

Cleanthes. That's a thing, father, which, perhaps, may come afterwards ; and they say that love is often the fruit of marriage.

Harpagon. No, the affair ought not to be risk'd on the man's side; and there are vexatious consequences, to which I've no mind to expose you; had you, in proper time, conceiv'd the least inclination for her, I would have made you marry her, in my stead: but as this is not the case, I shall follow my first design, and marry her myself.

Cleanthes. Well, father, since matters are so, I must discover my heart to you; I must let you into this secret of ours. The truth is, I've been in love with her from the day I saw her in the park; my design was of late to have ask'd her of you for a wife, and nothing could have kept me from it, but the declaration of your sentiments, and the fear of displeasing you.

Harpagon. Did you visit her?

Cleanthes. Yes, father.

Harpagon. Very often?

Cleanthes. Pretty well, for the time.

Harpagon. Did they receive you well?

Cleanthes. Very well, but without knowing who I was; and that was the occasion of Mariana's surprize just now.

Harpagon. Did you declare your passion for her, and the design you had of marrying her?

Cleanthes. Most certainly; and I had even made some faint overtures to her mother.

Harpagon. Did she hearken to your proposals concerning her daughter?

Cleanthes. Yes, very civilly.

Harpagon. And did the daughter sympathize strongly with your passion?

Cleanthes. If I am to believe appearances, I persuade myself, father, that she has some kindness for me.

Harpagon. I'm very glad to have learn'd a secret of this kind; this is exactly what I wanted. Hark'e me, son, do you know what you've to do? You must think, if you please, of quitting your love; of giving over all pursuits after a person I design for myself; and of marrying, ere long, the person assign'd you.

Cleanthes. How, father, d'ye play upon me in this manner? Well, since matters are come to that, I declare to you, that I will not quit the passion I have for Mariana; and that there is no extremity to which I will not abandon myself, to dispute that conquest with you; and that if you have the consent of a mother on your side, I shall have other succours, perhaps, will fight on mine.

Harpagon. How, rascal! have you the assurance to trespass upon my purlicus.

Cleanthes. 'Tis you who trespass upon mine, I have the prior title.

Harpagon. Am I not your father? and don't you owe me respect?

Cleanthes. These are not things in which children should be oblig'd to pay deference to their fathers; and love knows no-body.

Harpagon. I will make you know me with a good cudgel.

Cleanthes. All your threatnings signify nothing.

Harpagon. Will you renounce Mariana?

Cleanthes. Upon no account.

Harpagon. A cudgel here immediately.

SCENE IV.

HARPAGON, CLEANTHES, Mr. JAMES.

Mr. JAMES.

HOLD! hold! hold, gentlemen! What's here to do? what d'ye mean?

Cleanthes. I don't value this a straw.

Mr. James to Cleanthes.] Ah! gently, Sir.

Harpagon. To talk to me with this impudence!

Mr. James to Harpagon.] Ah! Sir, for heaven's sake.

Cleanthes. I won't bate you an ace.

Mr. James to Cleanthes.] What, to your father?

Harpagon. Let me do it.

Mr. James to Harpagon.] What, to your son? Once more ha' done for my sake.

Harpagon. I'll make you judge, Mr. James, in this affair, to shew how much I am in the right.

Mr. James. Agreed; [to Cleanthes.] go farther off.

Harpagon. I've a kindness for a girl whom I have a mind to marry; and this rascal has the impudence to be in love in the same place, and to make his pretensions there in spite of my orders.

Mr. James. Ah! he's in the wrong.

Harpagon. Is it not a horrible thing, for a son to come in competition with his father? and ought he not, in duty, to abstain from touching upon my inclinations?

Mr. James. You're in the right on't. Let me speak to him, and stay you there.

Cleanthes to Mr. James who is coming up to him.] Well, yes, since he will choose thee for judge, I don't refuse it; 'tis nothing to me who it is, and I'm willing

too, to refer myself to you, Mr. James, concerning our difference.

Mr. James. 'Tis a great honour you do me.

Cleanthes. I am smitten with a young lady, who answers my addresses, and tenderly receives the offer of my heart; and my father takes it into his head to disturb our amour, by demanding of her for a wife.

Mr. James. He's certainly in the wrong.

Cleanthes. Is he not asham'd, at his age, to think of marrying? Does it become him to be amorous again? And ought he not to leave this business to young fellows?

Mr. James. You're in the right, 'tis a jest in him. Let me speak two words to him. [He returns to Harpagon.] Well, your son is not so strange a creature as you say; he submits to reason. He says he knows the respect he owes you; that he was only hurried away in the first heat of passion; and that he'll by no means refuse submitting himself to any thing you please, provided you would but treat him better than you do, and give him some person in marriage, with whom he has reason to be satisfy'd.

Harpagon. Oh! tell him, Mr. James, that on that *proviso*, he may expect any thing from me; and that, Mariana excepted, I give him the liberty of choosing whom he pleases,

Mr. James. Let me alone. [To Cleanthes.] Well, your father is not so unreasonable as you make him; and he declar'd to me that 'twas your fierceness threw him into a passion; that 'twas your manner of acting put him upon haying her; and that he will be very ready to grant you all you wish, provided you go about it with mildness, and pay him the deference, respect, and submission that a son owes to his father.

Cleanthes. Ah! Mr. James, you may assure him, that if he grants me Mariana, he shall always find me the most submissive of men; and that I shall never do any thing but according to his pleasure.

Mr. James to Harpagon,] 'Tis done; he consents to what you say.

Harpagon. That's the happiest thing in the world.

Mr. James to Cleanthes.] All's over; he's satisfied with your promises.

Cleanthes. Heaven be prais'd.

Mr. James. Gentlemen, you've nothing to do but to discourse the matter over together; here are you now agreed; and you were just at daggers-drawing, for want of understanding one another.

Cleanthes. My dear Mr. James, I shall be obliged to you all my life.

Mr. James. There no reason, Sir.

Harpagon. You have done me a pleasure, Mr. James, and it deserves a reward. [Harpagon fumbling in his pocket, Mr. James holds out his hand, but Harpagon only pulls out his handkerchief.] Go, I shall remember it, I assure you.

Mr. James. I kiss your hand.

SCENE V.

HARPAGON, CLEANTHES.

CLEANTHES.

I ASK you pardon, father, for the passion I discovered.

Harpagon. 'Tis nothing at all.

Cleanthes. I assure you it gives me all the concern in the world.

Harpagon. And it gives me all the joy in the world, to see you brought to reason.

Cleanthes. What goodness is it in you so soon to forget my fault!

Harpagon. One easily forgets the faults of children, when they return to their duty.

Cleanthes. What, to retain no resentment for all my extravagances!

Harpagon. 'Tis what you oblige me to by the submission and respect with which you carry yourself.

Cleanthes. I promise you, father, that I shall preserve in my mind the remembrance of your goodness, even to the grave.

Harpagon. And I promise you, there's nothing you may not obtain of me.

Cleanthes. Ah! father, I ask nothing more of you, you have given me enough, when you gave me Mariana.

Harpagon. How!

Cleanthes. I say, father, that you have made me too happy, and that I find every thing included in the favour of giving me Mariana.

Harpagon. Who is it talks of giving you Mariana?

Cleanthes. You, father.

Harpagon. I?

Cleanthes. Most certainly.

Harpagon. How I? 'Tis you promis'd to renounce her.

Cleanthes. I renounce her?

Harpagon. Yes.

Cleanthes. Not at all.

Harpagon. Han't you given up all pretences to her?

Cleanthes. On the contrary, I'm more determined than ever.

Harpagon. How, rascal, again?

Cleanthes. Nothing can alter me.

Harpagon. Let me at thee, villain.

Cleanthes. Do what you please.

Harpagon. I forbid thee ever seeing me more.

Cleanthes. Sooner the better.

Harpagon. I abandon thee.

Cleanthes. Abandon me.

Harpagon. I renounce thee for my son.

Cleanthes. Be it so.

Harpagon. I disinherit thee.

Cleanthes. What you will.

Harpagon. I give thee my curse.

Cleanthes. I've nothing to do with your gifts.

SCENE VI.

CLEANTHES, LA FLECHE.

LA FLECHE coming out of the garden with a casket.

AH! Sir, I find you in the nick of time. Follow me, quick.

Cleanthes. What's there?

La Fleche. Follow me, I tell you, we're all right.

Cleanthes. How?

La Fleche. Here's your business.

Cleanthes. What?

La Fleche. I've had a sheep's eye upon it all day.

Cleanthes. What is it?

La Fleche. Your father's treasure, which I've caught.

Cleanthes. How hast thou done it?

La Fleche. You shall know all; let's away, I hear him cry out.

SCENE VII.

HARPAGON from the garden, crying thieves.

THIEVES, thieves, murder, assassination. Justice, just heaven! I'm undone, I'm murder'd, they've cut my throat, they've stole my money. Who can this be? What's become of him? Where is he? Where does he hide himself? What shall I do to find him? Whither run? Whither not run? Is not he there? Is not he here? Who's there? Stand. Restore me my money, rascal — [To himself, laying hold of his own arm.] Ah! 'tis myself. My mind's disturb'd; and I don't know where I am, who I am, or what I do. Alas! my poor money, my poor money, my dear friend, they have bereav'd me of thee; and since thou art remov'd, I've lost my support, my consolation, my joy; every thing's at an end with me, and I've no more to do in the world: without thee 'tis impossible for me to live. 'Tis over with me, I can no more, I die, I'm dead, I'm bury'd. Is there no-body will raise me to life again, by restoring my dear money, or informing me who has took it? Heh! what say you? Alas, 'tis no-body. Whoever they be that have given the blow, they must have nick'd their opportunity with a great deal of care; they pitch'd upon the exact time when I was in discourse with my villain of a son. Let's out; I'll go demand justice, and order my whole family to be put to the torture; my maids, my footmen, my son, my daughter, and myself too. What a croud's here got together! I can cast my eyes on no-body who gives me not suspicion, every thing seems my thief. Heh! what are they talking of there? Of him that robb'd me?

What noise is that above? Is it my thief that's there? For heaven's sake, if you know tidings of my thief, I beseech you tell me. Is he not hid there amongst you? They all stare at me, and fall a laughing. You'll see that they are certainly concern'd in this robbery committed upon me. Here, quick, commissaries, archers, provosts, judges, racks, gibbets, and executioners. I'll hang all the world; and if I find not my money again, I'll hang myself afterwards.

ACT V. SCENE I.

HARPAGON, A COMMISSARY.

COMMISSARY.

LET me alone, thank heaven I know my business. 'Tis not to-day that I've been employ'd in thief-catching; and would I had as many thousand crown-bags as I have hang'd persons.

Harpagon. All magistrates are interested to take this affair in hand; and if they don't find me out my money, I'll demand justice upon justice itself.

Commissary. We must make the hue and cry as far as is requisite. You say that there was in this casket—

Harpagon. Ten thousand crowns well told.

Commissary. Ten thousand crowns?

Harpagon weeping.] Ten thousand crowns.

Commissary. The robbery is considerable.

Harpagon. There's no punishment great enough for the enormity of the crime; and if it remains unpunish'd, the most sacred things are no longer secure.

Commissary. In what coin was the sum?

Harpagon. In good Louis-d'ors, and ponderous pistoles.

Commissary. Whom do you suspect of this robbery?

Harpagon. All the world; and I'd have you take into custody the whole city and suburbs.

Commissary. You must not, believe me, scare people too much; but endeavour to fish out some evidence by fair means, in order to proceed afterwards with more rigour, for the recovery of the sum they have taken from you.

SCENE II.

HARPAGON, COMMISSARY, Mr. JAMES.

Mr. JAMES at the end of the stage, turning back to the door he came out of.

I SHALL be back again presently. Let his throat be cut immediately; let them singe me his feet, let them put him into boiling water, and hang him me up at the cieling.

Harpagon. Who? he that robb'd me?

Mr. James. I speak of a sucking pig, which your steward has just sent me, and I'll dress him for you after my own fancy.

Harpagon. That's not the question. [Turns to the commissary.] And here's one you are to talk with upon another affair.

Commissary. Don't put yourself in a fright. I'm not a man will scandalize you; and matters shall be carry'd on by fair means.

Mr. James. Is the gentleman to sup with you?

Commissary. In this case, my dear friend, you must hide nothing from your master.

Mr. James. Troth, Sir, I'll shew him all my skill can do; I will treat you in the best manner I possibly can.

Harpagon. That's not the affair.

Mr. James. If I don't make you as good cheer as I would, 'tis the fault of your Mr. Steward, who has clipped my wings with the scissars of his oeconomy.

Harpagon. Rascal, we're about other matters than supper; and I desire thou'lt tell me tidings of the money they've taken from me.

Mr. James. Have they taken your money?

Harpagon. Yes, rascal; and I'll have thee hang'd if thou dost not restore it me.

Commissary to Harpagon.] Pray now don't use him ill. I see, by his looks, he's an honest fellow; and that, without being sent to goal, he'll discover all you want to know: yes, friend, if you confess the thing to us, no harm shall come to you, and you shall be properly rewarded by your master. They've taken his money from him to-day, and it can't be but you must know some tidings of this affair.

Mr. James aside.] The very thing I wish, to be reveng'd on our steward: since he came within our doors, he's the favourite; no advice heard but his; and besides, the late cudgeling bout sticks on my stomach.

Harpagon. What art thou puzzling about?

Commissary. Let him alone. He's going to satisfy you; I told you that he was an honest fellow.

Mr. James. Sir, if you will have me speak out the real thing, I believe 'tis your dear Mr. Steward who has done the business.

Harpagon. Valere?

Mr. James. Yes.

Harpagon. He who appears to me so trusty?

Mr. James. The very same. I believe 'tis he that has robbed you.

Harpagon. Upon what grounds do you believe so?

Mr. James. On what grounds?

Harpagon. Yes.

Mr. James. I believe it — because I do believe it. Commissary. But it is necessary to tell the circumstances you know.

Harpagon. Did you see him hovering about the place where I had put my money?

Mr. James. Yes, indeed. Where was your money?

Harpagon. In the garden.

Mr. James. Exactly; I saw him hovering about the garden. And what was this money in?

Harpagon. In a casket.

Mr. James. The very thing. I saw him have a casket.

Harpagon. And how was this casket made? I shall easily see whether it is mine.

Mr. James. How was it made?

Harpagon. Yes.

Mr. James. It was made — it was made like a casket.

Commissary. That's right. But describe it a little that we may see.

Mr. James. 'Tis a large casket.

Harpagon. That they stole from me is a small one.

Mr. James. Why, yes, it is small if you take it in that way; but I call it large for what it contains.

Commissary. And what colour is it?

Mr. James. What colour?

Commissary. Yes.

Mr. James. 'Tis of a colour — 'Tis of a certain colour, there — Could not you help me out?

Harpagon. Heh!

Mr. James. Is not it red?

Harpagon. No, gray.

Mr. James. Why, yes, gray-red; that's what I would have said.

Harpagon. There's no manner of doubt. 'Tis certainly it. Write, Sir, write down his deposition. Heavens! Whom to trust hereafter! one must never more swear to any thing; and I believe after this, that I may rob myself.

Mr. James to Harpagon.] Here he is come back, Sir. Don't go tell him, however, that 'tis I who have discover'd this.

SCENE III.

HARPAGON, VALERE, COMMISSARY,

Mr. JAMES.

HARPAGON.

HERE, come and confess an action the most black, an attempt the most horrible that ever was committed.

Valere. What do ye mean, Sir?

Harpagon. How, traitor, not blush at thy crime?

Valere. Of what crime would you speak?

Harpagon. Of what crime would I speak, scoundrel, as if you did not know what I would say? 'Tis in vain you pretend to disguise it. The business is out, and they have just now told me all. How could you abuse my kindness in this manner, and introduce yourself into my house on purpose to betray me, to play me a trick of this nature?

Valere. Sir, since they have discovered all to you, I won't seek to palliate, or deny the thing.

Mr. James. Oh! hoh! could I guess without thinking of it?

Valere. 'Twas my design to speak to you about it: and I was willing to wait a favourable opportunity: but since 'tis as it is, I conjure you not to ruffle yourself, and to hear my reasons.

Harpagon. And what fine reasons can you give me, infamous thief?

Valere. Nay, Sir, I have not deserv'd such names. 'Tis true, I have committed an offence against you: but, after all, my fault is pardonable.

Harpagon. How pardonable? a premeditated blow! an assassination of this kind!

Valere. For goodness sake, don't put yourself in a passion. When you have heard me, you'll see the mischief is not so great as you make it.

Harpagon. The mischief not so great as I make it? What! my blood, my bowels, rascal?

Valere. Your blood, Sir, is not fallen into bad hands. I'm of a rank not to do it injury; there's nothing in all this, but what I can well make reparation for.

Harpagon. So I intend you shall; and that you restore me what you have taken from me.

Valere. Your honour, Sir, shall be fully satisfy'd.

Harpagon. Honour's not in the question here. But, tell me, who mov'd you to this action?

Valere. Alas! Do you ask me?

Harpagon. Yes, truly, I do ask you.

Valere. A god who carries his excuse for every thing he does: Love.

Harpagon. Love!

Valere.

Valere. Yes.

Harpagon. Fine love, fine love, in faith! love of my Louis-d'ors.

Valere. No, Sir, 'tis not your riches have tempted me, 'tis not that has dazzled me; and I protest and vow never to make pretence to any of your wealth, provided you would leave me in the possession of what I have.

Harpagon. I will not do it, a legion take me if I suffer it: but see what insolence, to desire to keep what he has robb'd me of.

Valere. Do you call this a robbery?

Harpagon. Do I call it a robbery? A treasure such as this.

Valere. 'Tis a treasure, 'tis true, and the most precious one, doubtless, that you have: but to let me have it will not be losing it. Upon my knees I ask it of you, this most charming treasure; and, to do right, you must grant it me.

Harpagon. The devil a bit. What a deuce does this drive at?

Valere. We have promis'd mutual faith, and have sworn never to forsake each other.

Harpagon. The oath is admirable, and the promise droll.

Valere. We are engag'd to an eternal union.

Harpagon. I shall forbid the banns, I assure you.

Valere. Nothing but death can separate us.

Harpagon. This is being devilishly bewitch'd with my money.

Valere. I have told you already, Sir, 'twas not interest that carry'd me to do what I have done. My heart has not acted by such springs as you imagine, and a motive more noble has inspir'd me with this resolution.

Harpagon. You'll see 'tis out of Christian charity he would have my money: but I'll give effectual orders here; and justice, impudent hang-dog, will do me right for all.

Valere. You may use me as you will, and here I am ready to suffer all the violence you please; but I beg of you, at least to believe, that if there is any harm, 'tis only me you are to accuse; and that your daughter is not, in the least, to blame in all this.

Harpagon. I much believe it truly. It would be very strange had my daughter been accomplice in such a crime. But I expect to have my treasure again, and that you confess whither you've carry'd it.

Valere. I? I have not carry'd it away, 'tis still at home.

Harpagon aside.] Oh my dear casket! [aloud.] Is't not gone out of my house?

Valere. No, Sir.

Harpagon. Heh! tell me a little, hast thou not been dabbling?

Valere. I dabbling? Ah! you wrong us both; the flame with which I burn is too pure, too full of respect to admit of that.

Harpagon aside.] Burn for my casket!

Valere. I would much rather have died, than have discover'd the least offensive thought; there was too much wisdom, too much honesty for that.

Harpagon. My casket too honest!

Valere. All my desires were limited to the pleasure of sight; and nothing criminal has profan'd the passion those fair eyes have inspir'd me with.

Harpagon aside.] The fair eyes of my casket! He speaks of it as a lover of his mistress.

Valere. Dame Claude, Sir, knows the whole truth of this adventure, and she can bear witness.

Harpagon. How! my maid an accomplice in the affair?

Valere. Yes, Sir, she was witness of our engagement; and it was after she knew my passion was honourable that she assisted me in persuading your daughter to plight me her troth, and receive mine.

Harpagon aside.] Hey! what, does the fear of justice make him rave? [to Valere.] What dost thou perplex us with about my daughter?

Valere. I say, Sir, that I had all the difficulty in the world to bring her modesty to consent to what my love requir'd.

Harpagon. The modesty of whom?

Valere. Of your daughter; and it was only since yesterday she could prevail upon herself to resolve we should mutually sign a promise of marriage.

Harpagon. Has my daughter sign'd thee a promise of marriage?

Valere. Yes, Sir, as on my part I have sign'd one to her.

Harpagon. O heavens! Misfortune upon misfortune!

Mr. James to the commissary.] Write, Sir, write.

Harpagon. Complication of mischief! Excess of despair! [To the commissary.] Come, Sir, do the duty of your office, and draw me up an inditement for him as a felon, and a suborner.

Mr. James. As a felon and a suborner.

Valere. These are names that don't belong to me; and when you know who I am —

SCENE IV.

HARPAGON, ELIZA, MARIANA, VALERE, FROSINA, Mr. JAMES, A COMMISSARY.

HARPAGON.

AH! graceless child! daughter unworthy of such a father! Is it thus you put in practice the lessons I've given you? Do you suffer yourself to be caught by an infamous thief, and engage yourself to him without my consent? But you shall be deceiv'd, both of you. [to Eliza.] Four strong walls shall answer for your conduct; [to Valere.] and a good gallows, impudent rascal, shall do me justice for thy audaciousness.

Valere. It will not be your passion will judge the affair; and they'll hear me, at least before they condemn me.

Harpagon. I was wrong to say a gallows, thou shalt be broke alive on the wheel.

Eliza kneeling to her father.] Ah! father, be a little more humane in your sentiments, I beseech you, and don't go to push matters with the utmost violence of paternal power. Suffer not yourself to be carry'd away by the first gusts of your passion; and give yourself time to consider what you do. Take the pains of looking more narrowly into the person you're so enrag'd at. He's quite another man than at present he appears to you; and you shall find it less strange I should have given myself to him, when you know that had it not been for him you would have long ago have lost me for ever. Yes, father, 'tis he who sav'd me from the great hazard which you

know I ran in the water ; and to whom you owe the life of that very daughter, who —

Harpagon. All this is nothing ; and it had been much better for me, had he suffered thee to drown, than to do what he has done.

Eliza. I conjure you, Sir, by paternal love grant me—

Harpagon. No, no ; I'll hear nothing ; and justice must do it's office.

Mr. James aside.] You'll pay me the blows of the cudgel.

Frosina aside.] What strange perplexity is here !

SCENE V.

ANSELM, HARPAGON, ELIZA, MARIANA, FROSINA, VALERE, COMMISSARY, Mr. JAMES.

ANSELM.

WHAT's the matter here, signior Harpagon ? You are very much ruffled, I see.

Harpagon. Ah ! signior Anselm, I am one of the most unfortunate men ; and here's the Lord knows what vexation and disorder in respect to the contract you come to sign ; I'm assassinated in my fortune, I'm assassinated in my honour ; and there's a traitor, a villain, who has violated all the most sacred ties ; who has slid himself into my family under the title of a menial servant, to rob me of my money, and to seduce my daughter.

Valere. Who minds your money, that you make such a senseless pother about ?

Harpagon. Yes, they've made each other a promise of marriage. This affront concerns you, signior Anselm ;

and 'tis you who ought to take party against him, and prosecute him to the utmost at your own expence, to revenge yourself on his insolence.

Anselm. It is not my design to force myself upon any body, or make any pretences to a heart which has already bestowed itself: but as to your interests, I'm ready to espouse them as if they were my own.

Harpagon. There's a gentleman that's a very honest commissary, who tells me he'll omit nothing which concerns the duty of his office. [To the commissary, pointing to Valere.] Charge him, Sir, as you should do, and make things very criminal.

Valere. I don't see what crime you can make of the passion I have for your daughter; and the punishment to which you think I may be condemned on account of our engagement, when 'tis known who I am —

Harpagon. I value all these stories not a straw; and the world now-a-days is full of nothing but your rascally quality, your impostors, who make advantage of their obscurity, who trick themselves insolently out, with the first illustrious name that comes into their head.

Valere. Know that I have a heart too honest, to take upon me any thing which does not belong to me; and that all Naples can bear witness of my birth.

Anselm. Soft and fair, take care what you are going to say. You run more risque here than you're aware of. You speak before a person to whom all Naples is known, and who can easily see through your story.

Valere. I'm not a man should fear any thing; if you know Naples, you know who Don Thomas d'Alburcy was.

Anselm. Doubtless I know him, and few people knew him better than I.

Harpagon. I care not either for Don Thomas, or for

Don Martin. [Seeing two candles burning, he blows out one.]

Anselm. Pray let him speak ; we shall see what he'll say of him.

Valere. I would say, that he's the person who gave me birth.

Anselm. He ?

Valere. Yes.

Anselm. Go, you jest ; find some other story that may succeed better for you ; and don't pretend to save yourself under this piece of imposture.

Valere. Pray express yourself with more decency. It is no imposture ; and I advance nothing here, which it would not be easy for me to justify.

Anselm. How ! dare you call yourself son of Don Thomas d'Alburcy ?

Valere. Yes, I dare ; and I am ready to maintain this truth against any person whatsoever.

Anselm. 'Tis a marvellous assurance. Know to your confusion, that it is sixteen years ago at least, that the person you mention was lost at sea with his wife and children, endeavouring to save their lives from the cruel persecutions which accompany'd the troubles at Naples, and which occasion'd the banishment of many noble families.

Valere. Yes : but know to your confusion, that his son, seven years of age, with a servant, was saved from that shipwreck by a Spanish vessel ; and that this son sav'd is the person who speaks to you. Know that the captain of this vessel, being touch'd at my misfortune, took a kindness to me ; that he brought me up as his own son ; and that arms have been my employment, ever since I was capable of them : that I have learn'd of

late that my father was not dead, as I had always believ'd; that passing this way, to go in search of him, an adventure, concerted by heaven, brought me to the sight of the charming Eliza; that this sight made me slave to her beauty; and that the violence of my love, and the severities of her father, made me take a resolution to introduce myself into his house, and send another person in quest of my parents.

Anselm. But what testimony, other than your own word, may assure us that this is not a fable built upon a truth?

Valere. The Spanish captain; a ruby seal which belong'd to my father; a bracelet of agate which my mother put upon my arm; and old Pedro, the servant who was saved with me from the shipwreck.

Mariana. Alas! I myself can answer here for what you've said, that you do not impose upon us; and every thing you say gives me clearly to know that you are my brother.

Valere. You my sister?

Mariana. Yes, my heart was touch'd from the moment you open'd your mouth; and our mother who will be overjoy'd at sight of you, has a thousand times entertain'd me with the misfortunes of our family. Heaven too suffer'd not us to perish in that melancholy shipwreck; but it only sav'd our lives at the expence of our liberty; and they were Corsairs who took up my mother and myself from the wreck of our vessel. After ten years of slavery, a lucky accident gave us our liberty, and we return'd to Naples, where we found all our effects sold, without being able to hear any tidings of our father. We took passage for Genoa, whither my mother went to pick up the unhappy remains of a family-estate

that had been torn to pieces; and from thence flying from the barbarous injustice of her relations, she came into these parts, where she has scarce lived any other than a languishing life.

Anselm. Oh! heaven! how great are the strokes of thy power! and how well dost thou let us see, that it belongs to thee alone to work miracles! Embrace me, my children, and mix your transports with those of your father.

Valere. Are you our father?

Mariana. Is it you my mother has so much lamented?

Anselm. Yes, my daughter, yes, my son, I am Don Thomas d'Alburcy, whom heaven sav'd from the waves, with all the money he had with him; and who having thought you all dead for more than sixteen years, was preparing, after long voyages, to seek for the consolation of a new family, in marrying some mild-temper'd and discreet person. The little security I saw for my life in returning to Naples, made me renounce it for ever; and having found means to sell all I had there, I have settled myself here, where, under the name of Anselm, I endeavour'd to get rid of all the vexations of that other name, which had occasion'd me so many crosses.

Harpagon to Anselm.] Is that your son?

Anselm. Yes.

Harpagon. I shall make you pay me the ten thousand crowns he has robb'd me of.

Anselm. He robb'd you!

Harpagon. The very same.

Valere. Who told you so?

Harpagon. Mr. James.

Valere. Didst thou tell him so?

Mr. James. You see that I say nothing.

Harpagon. Yes. There's Mr. Commissary who has taken his deposition.

Valere. Can you think me capable of so base an action?

Harpagon. Capable, or not capable, I'll have my money again.

SCENE THE LAST.

HARPAGON, ANSELM, ELIZA, MARIANA,
CLEANTHES, VALERE, FROSINA, COM-
MISSARY, Mr. JAMES, LA FLECHE.

CLEANTHES.

DO not torment yourself, Sir, accuse no-body. I've had news of your affair; and I come here to tell you, that if you will but resolve to let me marry Mariana, your money shall be restor'd you.

Harpagon. Where is it?

Cleantes. Give yourself no manner of trouble. 'Tis in a place I'm answerable for; and all depends upon me alone. You are to tell me what you determine upon; and you have your choice, either to give me up Mariana, or lose your casket.

Harpagon. Have they took nothing out of it?

Cleantes. Nothing at all. Consider whether you design to subscribe to this marriage, and join your consent to that of her mother, who leaves her the liberty of choice betwixt us two.

Mariana to Cleantes.] But you don't consider that this consent alone is not sufficient; and that heaven, with a brother, as you see, [pointing to Valere:] has

restor'd me a father, [pointing to Anselm.] from whom you are to obtain me.

Anselm. Heaven, my children, has not restor'd me to you, to oppose your desires. Signior Harpagon, you know very well that the choice of a young person will fall upon the son, sooner than upon the father. Come, don't oblige people to say what's unnecessary for us to hear, and consent, as I do, to this double marriage.

Harpagon. To be well advis'd, I must see my casket, Cleanthes. You shall see it safe and sound.

Harpagon. I have no money to give my children in marriage.

Anselm. Well, I have some for them, let not that disquiet you.

Harpagon. You'll oblige yourself to defray the whole expence of these two marriages?

Anselm. Yes, I do oblige myself to it. Are you satisfy'd?

Harpagon. Yes, provided you will order me a suit of clothes for the nuptials.

Anselm. Agreed. Come let's enjoy the mirth this happy day presents us with.

Commissary. Hold, gentlemen, hold, softly, if you please. Who pays me for my writings?

Harpagon. We have nothing to do with your writings.

Commissary. Indeed! But I shan't pretend to make them for nothing, not I.

Harpagon pointing to Mr. James.] There's a fellow I'll give you to hang for payment.

Mr. James. Alas! What must one do then? They cudgel me for speaking truth; and they would hang me for lying.

Anselm. Signior Harpagon, you must pardon him this piece of imposture.

Harpagon. You'll pay the commissary then.

Anselm. Done. Let us go immediately, and share our joy with your mother.

Harpagon. And I, to see my dear casket.

THE END.

7 MA 55

ROMANTIC LADIES

A C T O R S

THE

ROMANTIC LADIES.

MAJOR, Maid to the Romantic Ladies.
AMANDER, Footman to the Romantic Ladies.
MARQUESS DE MARGARITE, the Countess's
VIRGIL, Lord of the Romantic Ladies.
LESLIE, a young man, friend to the Countess.
CHRISTIE, a young man, friend to the Countess.

COMEDY.

SCENE THE FIRST. Countess's House.

A C T O R S.

LA GRANGE.

DU CROISY.

GORGIBUS, a good Citizen.

MAGDALEN, Daughter of

Gorgibus.

} The Romantic Ladies.

CATHOS, Nice of Gorgibus.

MAROT, Maid to the Romantic Ladies.

ALMANZOR, Footman to the Romantic Ladies.

MARQUISS DE MASCARILLE, La Grange's
Valet.

VISCOUNT JODELET, Du Croisy's Valet.

LUCILIA.

CELIMENE.

} Neighbours to Gorgibus.

TWO CHAIRMEN

FIDLERS.



SCENE Paris, in Gorgibus's house.

THE ROMANTIC LADIES.

SCENE I.

LA GRANGE, DU CROISY.

DU CROISY.

MR. La Grange.
La Grange. What?
Du Croisy. Look at me a little without laughing.

La Grange. Well.

Du Croisy. What say you of our visit?—are you highly pleas'd with it?

La Grange. Have we both reason to be so, in your opinion?

Du Croisy. Not at all, to say the truth.

La Grange. For my part, I assure you, that I am quite shock'd at it.—Pray now, did ever any body behold a couple of foolish country wenches give themselves such airs as these, or two men treated with more contempt than we?—They could hardly bring themselves to order chairs for us.—I never saw such whispering as there was between them; such yawning, such rubbing of the eyes, and asking so often what o'clock it was. Did they answer any thing more than yes or no to all that we could say to them? And don't you, in short, agree with me, that if we had been the great-

est scoundrels in the world, they could not use us worse than they have done?

Du Croisy. Methinks you take the matter much to heart.

La Grange. I do take it so undoubtedly, and in such a manner, that I'll revenge myself for this impertinence. — I know well enough the reason of their slighting us. The conceited air has not infected Paris only, but is likewise spread into the countries, and our ridiculous nymphs have sucked in their share of it. In a word, they're a strange medley of coquetry and affectation. I see what a man must be, to be well receiv'd by them, and if you'll trust to me, we'll play them a trick shall make them see their folly, and teach them to distinguish people a little better.

Du Croisy. How can this be done?

La Grange. I have a certain valet named Mascarille, who passes for a sort of a wit, in the opinion of many people; for nothing now-a-days is cheaper than wit. He's an unaccountable fellow, that takes it in his head to appear as a man of quality. He usually values himself for intrigues and poetry, and despises other valets so far as to call them brutes.

Du Croisy. Well; what mean you to do with him?

La Grange. What mean I to do with him! — he must: — but, let's be gone from hence, before —

SCENE II.

GORGIBUS, DU CROISY, LA GRANGE.

GORGIBUS.

WELL, gentlemen, you have seen my niece and

my daughter ; do matters go well ? What is the result of this visit ?

La Grange. That's a thing you may better learn from them than us. All we can say to you, is, that we return you thanks for the favour you have done us, and remain your most humble servants.

Du Croisy! Your most humble servants.

Gorgibus alone.] Hoity : toity ! methinks they go away dissatisfy'd. What could occasion their discontent ? — I must learn a little how it is. — Soho there.

SCENE III.

GORGIBUS, MAROT.

MAROT.

WHAT would you please to have, Sir ?

Gorgibus. Where are your mistresses ?

Marot. In their closet.

Gorgibus. What are they doing ?

Marot. Making pomatum for their lips.

Gorgibus. They make too much pomatum. — Bid them come down. — [alone.] These hussies, with their pomatum have, I think, a mind to ruin me. I see nothing all about but whites of eggs, nuns cream, and a thousand other fooleries. They have us'd, since we came hither, the lard of a dozen hogs at least ; and four servants might, every day, be maintain'd with the sheeps trotters that they employ.

SCENE IV.

MAGDALEN, CATHOS, GORGIBUS.

GORGIBUS.

TRULY, there's great occasion to be at such an expence to grease your faces.—Inform me, pray, a little, what you have done to these gentlemen, that I saw them go away with so much coldness. Did not I charge you to receive them as persons that I intended for your husbands?

Magdalen. Dear father, what regard would you have us pay to the irregular proceedings of these people?

Cathos. What way, uncle, can a woman that has ever so little understanding be able to reconcile herself to their persons?

Gorgibus. What see you in them to find fault with?

Magdalen. Fine galantry of theirs, indeed!—What! to begin immediately with matrimony!

Gorgibus. With what would you have them begin? with whoring?—Is not this a way of acting which both of you have reason to approve of as well as I? Can any thing be more obliging than this; and that holy rye they desire, is it not a proof of the fairness of their designs?

Magdalen. O father! what you say is extremely like a citizen. It makes me ashamed to hear you talk in this manner: you should acquaint yourself a little with the fine air of things.

Gorgibus. I've nothing to do with the air nor the song.—I tell you, that matrimony is an holy and a sacred thing, and to begin with that is to act like honest people.

Magdalen. Lard ! were the whole world like you, a romance would be ended presently ! what a fine thing it would have been if Cyrus had immediately espoused Mandana, and if Aronce had been married in all haste to Clelia !

Gorgibus. What is this she talks of ?

Magdalen. Here's my cousin, father, will tell you as well as I, that matrimony ought never to be brought about till after other adventures.— A lover, to be agreeable, must understand how to utter fine sentiments, to sigh forth the soft, the tender, and the passionate ; and his addresses must be according to the rules.— In the first place, he should behold, either at church, or in the park, or at some public ceremony, the person of whom he becomes enamour'd : or, else, he should be fatally introduc'd to her by a relation or a friend, and go from her melancholy and pensive. He conceals his passion, for some time, from the beloved object, but, however, pays her several visits, at which some discourse about galantry never fails to be brought upon the carpet to exercise the wits of all the company.— The day comes for him to declare himself, which usually should be done in the walk of some garden, while the company is at a distance. This declaration is follow'd by an immediate resentment, which appears by our colouring, and which, for a while, banishes the lover from our presence. He finds afterwards the way to pacify us, to accustom us insensibly to hear his passion, and to draw from us that confession which causes so much trouble.— Then follow the adventures ; the rivals that thwart an establish'd inclination, the persecutions of fathers, the jealousies arising from false appearances, the complainings, the despair, the running off with, and it's conse-

quences. Thus are things carry'd on in an handsome manner, and these are the rules that cannot be dispensed with in a genteel piece of galantry,— But to come point blank to the conjugal union! to make no love but by making the marriage contract, and take a romance just by the tail! once more, dear father, nothing can be more mechanic than such a proceeding, and I'm sick at heart with the idea only that it gives me.

Gorgibus. What the devil of nonsense is this I hear? This is a towering stile, indeed!

Cathos. In short, uncle, my cousin tells you the truth of the matter. How can one receive people well whose courtship is all an impropriety? I'll lay a wager they have never seen the map of tenderness, and that fond epistles, little disquietudes, polite letters, and sprightly verses, are regions to them unknown. Don't you observe their whole person shews it, and that they have nothing of the air which gives one at first sight a good opinion of people?— To come upon a love-visit with a leg intirely unadorn'd; a hat destitute of feathers; a head with the locks irregular; and a habit that endures an indigence of ribbons:— heavens! what lovers are these! what a stinginess in dress! what a barrenness of conversation! 'tis over with them presently, they keep it not up at all. I took notice likewise, that their neck-cloths were not made by a good workwoman, and that their breeches were not big enough by more than half a foot.

Gorgibus. I think they are both mad, nor can I understand any thing of this gibberish.— Cathos, and you Magdalen.

Magdalen. Ah! pray, father, leave off these strange names, and call us by some other.

Gorgibus. What d'ye mean by those strange names! are they not your christian names?

Magdalen. Lard! how vulgar you are! — for my own part, one thing I wonder at, is how you could possibly get such a sprightly girl as I. Did ever any body in a beautiful stile talk of Cathos or of Magdalen? and must you not acknowledge, that either of these names would be enough to disgrace the finest romance in the world.

Cathos. Really, uncle, an ear that's a little delicate suffers extremely at hearing these words pronounced; and the name of Polixena, which my cousin has chosen, and that of Amintha which I give myself, have an agreeableness which you must acknowledge.

Gorgibus. Heark'ee, — there needs but one word. — I don't know that you have other names than what were given you by your godfathers and godmothers; and as for those gentlemen of whom we speak, I am acquainted both with their families and their fortunes, and positively resolve that they shall be your husbands. I'm tir'd of keeping you upon my hands, and the care of a couple of girls is somewhat too weighty a charge for a man of my years.

Cathos. For myself, uncle, all I can say is, that I think matrimony a mighty shocking thing. How can one endure the thought of lying by a man that's really naked?

Magdalen. Give us leave to take breath a little amongst the *beau monde* of Paris, where we are but just arriv'd. Permit us to form the contexture of our romance at leisure, and don't hasten on the conclusion so much.

Gorgibus aside.] There's no question of it; they're

quite distracted. [aloud.] Once more, I tell you, I comprehend nothing of all this nonsense, but I'll be master absolutely; and to cut short all kind of dispute, either you shall both be married very speedily, or, faith you shall be nuns; — that I swear solemnly.

SCENE V.

CATHOS, MAGDALEN.

CATHOS.

LARD! my dear; how is thy father immers'd in matter! how gross is his understanding! and what a gloominess overcasts his soul!

Magdalen. What would you have, my dear? I'm in confusion for him. — I can hardly persuade myself that I am indeed his daughter, but believe some adventure one time or other will happen to discover a more illustrious descent.

Cathos. I believe so, truly; there is all the likelihood in the world of it; and for my part, when I consider myself also —

SCENE VI.

CATHOS, MAGDALEN, MAROT.

MAROT.

HERE is a footman asks if you're at home, and says, his master would come to see you.

Magdalen. Learn you fool, to express yourself a little less vulgarly — Say, here's an attendant enquires if it is commodious for you to become visible.

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Marot. I don't understand Latin, mistress, and ha'n't learn'd flossophy out of Cyrus, as you ha' done.

Magdalen. Impertinent creature! how can this be endur'd! — And who is the master of this footman?

Marot. He told me it was the marquiss de Mascaille.

Magdalen. Ah! my dear! a-marquiss! a-marquiss! — Well, go tell him we are visble. — This is certainly some wit, who has heard us talk'd of.

Cathos. Undoubtedly, my dear.

Magdalen. He must be receiv'd below in the parlour rather than in our chamber; let's adjust our hair a little, and maintain our character. — Come in hither, quickly, and hold to us the counsellor of the graces.

Marot. O' my faith, I can't tell what sort of beast that is; you must talk like a christian if you'd have me know your meaning.

Cathos. Bring us the looking-glass, you ignorant wretch! and take care not to sully it's beauty by the communication of your image. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE VII.

MASCARILLE, and two CHAIRMEN.

MASCARILLE.

HOLD, chairmen hold. La, la, la, la, la, la. — I think these varlets intend to beat me to pieces by jumbling me against the walls and pavement.

1. Chairman. Ay, marry: because the gate is narrow, and you'd make us come quite in with you.

Mascarille. I think so truly — Would you have me expose the delicacy of my feathers to the inclemency of the rainy season, you rascals, and let the dirt receive

the impression of my shoes? — be gone : take away your chair.

2. Chairman. Then, please to pay us, Sir.

Mascarille. Hem !

2. Chairman. Please to give us our money, Sir, I say.

— Mascarille giving him a blow.] How, rogue, ask money of a person of my quality !

2. Chairman. Are poor people to be paid thus? and will your quality get a dinner for us?

Mascarille. Ha, ha, ha, I shall teach you to know yourself.— Dare the scoundrels play upon me !

1. Chairman taking one of the poles of his chair.] Come, pay us quickly.

Mascarille. What?

1. Chairman. I say, I'll have the money this moment.

Mascarille. This now is an understanding fellow.

1. Chairman. Make haste then.

Mascarille. Ay, you speak properly, for your part : but t'other is a rogue that knows not what he says.— There : are you contented ?

1. Chairman. No, I'm not contented, you struck my companion, and — [Holding up his pole.

Mascarille. Hold, there, that's for the blow.— Every thing may be obtain'd of me, when people take the right method.— Go : but come and fetch me by and by, and carry me to the drawing-room.

SCENE VIII.

MAROT, MASCARILLE.

MAROT.

SIR, my mistresses will come presently.

Mascarille.

Mascarille. Let them not hurry themselves, I am here posted commodiously for waiting.

Marot. They are here.

SCENE IX.

MAGDALEN, CATHOS, MASCARILLE,
ALMANZOR.

MASCARILLE after having saluted them.

LADIES, you'll be surpriz'd, no doubt, at the boldness of my visit: but your reputation brings this unlucky affair upon you, and merit has for me such potent charms, that I run every where after it.

Magdalen. If you pursue merit, 'tis not in our grounds that you must hunt.

Cathos. To find merit at our house, you must have brought it hither yourself.

Mascarille. Ah! I engage to prove the contrary.—Fame told the truth in her relation of your worth, and you are going to *piquer*, *repiquer*, and *capot* all that is polite in Paris.

Magdalen. Your complaisance pushes a little too far the liberality of it's praises, and my cousin and I are not prepar'd to oppose our gravity to the sweetness of your flattery.

Cathos. My dear, we should call for chairs.

Magdalen. Here, Almanzor.

Almanzor. Madam.

Magdalen. Convey hither to us, instantly, the conveniences of conversation.

Mascarille. But hold, am I in safety here?

[Exit Almanzor.]

Cathos. What is it you fear?

Mascarille. Some robbery upon my heart, some assassination of my freedom. I behold there a pair of eyes that seem to be very naughty boys, to insult over liberty, and use a heart as a Turk does a Negro slave.—What the duce! do they put themselves upon their murdering guard as soon as one comes near them? Ah! by my faith, I'm suspicious of them, and must either scamper away, or expect city-security that they shall not do me mischief.

Magdalen. My dear, this is the sprightly character.

Cathos. I see, indeed, he's an Amilcar.

Magdalen. Fear nothing, our eyes have no ill designs, and your heart may be well assur'd of their good behaviour.

Cathos. But, good Sir, be not inexorable to that elbow-chair which has stretch'd out it's arms to you for a quarter of an hour; indulge a little the desire it has to embrace you.

Mascarille having comb'd himself, and adjusted the rolls of his stockings.] Well, ladies, what do you say of Paris?

Magdalen. Alas! what can we say of it? 'twould be the antipodes of reason not to acknowledge that Paris is the grand cabinet of wonders, the center of good taste, wit, and galantry.

Mascarille. I think, for my part, that out of Paris there's no living for people of fashion.

Cathos. That's an indisputable truth.

Mascarille. 'Tis a little dirty; but then one has a chair.

Magdalen. A chair, really, is a wonderful security against the insults of the dirt and the bad weather.

Mascarille. You receive abundance of visits: sure? What a fine genius is yours?

Magdalen. Alas! we're not yet known: but we are in the way so to be; for we have a particular friend, that has promis'd to bring hither all the gentlemen concern'd in the choice collection of miscellanies.

Cathos. And some others whom he named to us likewise as the sovereign judges of fine things.

Mascarille. I'll do your business better than any body; they all visit me, and I can say that I never rise without half a dozen wits about me.

Magdalen. O lard! we shall be obliged to you to the last degree if you'll do us that kindness; for, in short, one must have the acquaintance of all these gentlemen, if one would be of the *beau monde*. 'Tis these that influence reputation at Paris; and in such a manner, you know, that only to keep them company is enough to occasion the report of one's being a critic, though there should be no other reason for it. But for myself, what I particularly consider, is, that by means of these ingenious visits, one is taught an hundred things which there's a necessity of knowing, and which are the quintessence of fine wit. One learns by it every day the little new galantries, the pretty correspondencies in prose or verse. One knows for certain, that such a person has compos'd the finest piece in the world upon such a subject; such a lady has made words to such a tune; this person has form'd a madrigal upon enjoyment; that has compos'd stanzas on infidelity; Mr. Such-a-one wrote an ode of six lines yesterday evening to Mr. Such-a-one, to which she sent him an answer this morning at eight o'clock; such an author has laid such a design; this writer is about the third part of his romance; that

other is putting his works into the press.—'Tis this makes you esteem'd in company; and if people are ignorant of these things, I would not give one pia for all the wit that they can have.

Cathos. In short, I think 'tis excessively ridiculous, for a person to pretend to wit and not know even the least stanza that is made every day; and, for my part, I should be under all the confusion in the world, should any body ask me if I had seen some new thing, which I had not seen.

Mascarille. 'Tis a shame, indeed, not to have the first of whatever is compos'd; but don't be in any pain, I'll establish an academy of wits at your house and give you my word, not a rhyme shall be made at Paris, which you shall not have by heart before any body else.—As for myself, such as you see me, I write a little when I'm in the mind, and you'll find handed about of mine in the fine assemblies at Paris, two hundred songs, as many sonnets, four hundred epigrams, and more than a thousand madrigals, without reckoning riddles and descriptions.

Magdalen. I must acknowledge that I am furiously for descriptions; I think nothing is so gallant.

Mascarille. Descriptions are difficult, and require a profound wit: you shall see some in my manner that won't disgust you.

Cathos. For my part, I am terribly fond of riddles.

Mascarille. They exercise the wit, and I have made four of them already this morning, which I'll give you to guess the meaning of.

Magdalen. Madrigals are agreeable, when they are well turn'd.

Mascarille. That's my particular qualification, and I'm about turning the whole Roman history into madrigals.

Magdalen. Ah! certainly, that must be incomparably fine; I bespeak one book at least, if you have it printed.

Mascarille. I promise each of you one, bound in the best manner. 'Tis below my quality; but I do it only for the benefit of the booksellers that tease me.

Magdalen. I fancy 'tis a great pleasure to see one's self in print.

Mascarille. Without doubt; but now I think on't, I must tell you an extempore that I made yesterday at a duchess's, a friend of mine, whom I was visiting; for I am devilishly ready at extempores.

Cathos. An extempore is certainly the touchstone of wit.

Mascarille. Here then.

Magdalen. We do, with all our ears.

Mascarille.

Oh! oh! quite off my guard was I;

Whilst no harm thinking,

You

I view;

Slily your eyes

My heart surprize;

Stop thief, stop thief, stop thief, I cry,

Cathos. Ah! my stars! this is carry'd to the utmost pitch of gallantry.

Mascarille. All I do has an air of the gentleman, it does not savour of the pedant.

Magdalen. It is distant from that above two thousand leagues.

Mascarille. Did you mind this beginning, *oh! oh!* this is extraordinary, *oh! oh!* — like a man that bethinks himself all at once, *oh! oh!* — The surprize, *oh! oh!*

Magdalen. Ay, I think that, *oh! oh!* admirable.

Mascarille. This is nothing as it were.

Cathos. Oh! my stars! what's that you say? Such sort of things as these cannot be enough esteem'd.

Magdalen. No doubt on't, and I should like better to have made that, *oh! oh!* than an epic poem.

Mascarille. Egad, you have a good taste.

Magdalen. Eh! I've not an exceeding bad one.

Mascarille. But don't you admire also, *quite off my guard was I*; — *quite off my guard was I*; I minded nothing of the matter: a natural way of speaking, *quite off my guard was I*. — *Whilst no harm thinking*; whilst innocently, without malice, like a poor sheep, *you I view*; that is to say, I amuse myself with considering, with observing, with contemplating you. *Slily your eyes* — What think you of the word *slily*? Isn't well chosen?

Cathos. Perfectly well.

Mascarille. *Slily*, cunningly, it seems as it were a cat coming to catch a mouse, *slily*.

Magdalen. Nothing can be better.

Mascarille. *My heart surprize*, snatch it away, force it from me; — *Stop thief, stop thief, stop thief, stop thief*. Would not you imagine a man were crying out and running after a thief to seize him, *stop thief, stop thief, stop thief, stop thief*.

Magdalen. It must be own'd that this has a witty and gallant turn.

Mascarille. I'll sing you the tune I've made to it.

Cathos. You have learn'd music?

Mascarille. I? — not at all.

Cathos. How can it be then?

Mascarille. People of quality know every thing, without ever learning any thing.

Magdalen. Undoubtedly, my dear.

Mascarille. Here if the tune be to your taste: *hem, hem, la, la, la, la, la.* The brutality of the season has furiously injur'd the delicacy of my voice: — but no matter, 'tis gentleman-like. [He sings.] *Oh! oh! quite off my guard was I.*—

Cathos. Ah! how passionate a tune is that! Don't it kill one with delight?

Magdalen. It is something in the chromatic taste.

Mascarille. Don't you find the thought well express'd in the tune, *stop thief, stop thief?* And then as if a body cry'd out violently, *stop, stop, stop, stop, stop, stop thief.* Then all at once, like a person out of breath, — *stop thief.*

Magdalen. This it is to understand the perfection of things, the grand perfection, the perfection of perfections. 'Tis all marvellous, I assure you; I'm in extasies both at the tune and the words.

Cathos. I never yet met with any thing so strong as this.

Mascarille. All I do comes naturally to me, 'tis without study.

Magdalen. Nature has treated you like a very fond mother, and you are her darling child.

Mascarille. How do you pass away the time, ladies?

Cathos. No way at all.

Magdalen. We've been here under a hideous abstinence from diversions.

Mascarille. I'm at your service to wait on you some day or other to the play, if you'll give me leave; and indeed a new one is to be acted, which I should be glad that we might see together.

Magdalen. That is not to be refus'd.

Mascarille. But I beseech you to applaud it well, when we shall be at it; for I'm engag'd to cry up the performance; the author visited me this morning to beg

me so to do.—'Tis the custom here for authors to come and read their new performances to us people of distinction, that they may engage us to approve of them, and give them a reputation; and I leave you to imagine, whether, when we say any thing, the pit dares contradict us.—For my part, I am very exact in this, and when I've promis'd any poet, always cry out, *how excellent it is*, before the candles are lighted.

Magdalen. Say no more of it, Paris is a wonderful place; an hundred things happen in it every day, which one knows not in the country, however witty one may be.

Cathos. 'Tis enough; now we are told, we'll do our part in crying out as we ought at every word that's said.

Masfearille. I don't know whether I'm mistaken; but you have all the looks of having written a play yourself.

Magdalen. Eh! there may be something in what you say.

Masfearille. Ah! faith, we must see it.—Between ourselves, I've compos'd one which I'll have acted.

Cathos. Ay! which company of actors will you give it to?

Masfearille. A fine question truly!—to the actors of the theatre royal;—none but they are capable of gaining things a reputation; the rest are ignorant creatures, that speak their parts just as one talks: they don't understand to make the verses roar, or pause at a beautiful passage; how can it be known where the fine lines are, if the actor does not stop at them, and apprise you thereby to clap?

Cathos. Really, there's a way of making an audience sensible of the beauties of a performance, and things are well esteem'd but according as they are well set off.

Masfearille. How d'ye like my trimming? D'ye think it suits my clothes?

Cathos. Perfectly.

Mascarille. The ribbon is well chosen.

Magdalen. Furiously well. 'Tis a charming plum colour.

Mascarille. What say you of my rollers?

Magdalen. They have perfectly a good air.

Mascarille. I may boast, however, that they're a quarter of a yard wider than any that have been made.

Magdalen. I must own I never saw the elegance of dress carry'd to such a height.

Mascarille. Employ the reflection of your smelling faculty a little upon these gloves.

Magdalen. They smell terribly fine.

Cathos. I never breath'd an odour more agreeable.

Mascarille. And this here. [He gives them his powder'd wig to smell too.]

Magdalen. That is extremely noble; the sublime of it is touch'd deliciously.

Mascarille. You say nothing of my feathers: how d'ye like them?

Cathos. They're dreadfully beautiful.

Mascarille. D'ye know this little bit o' top cost me a Lous d'ore? for my part, I have the madness to be ready generally to give more than any body for what's most excellent.

Magdalen. You and I sympathize, I assure you; I'm furiously delicate in every thing I wear; and even to my very socks, I can't endure any thing which is not by a good hand.

Mascarille crying out suddenly.] O! o! o! gently, gently; — damme, ladies, this is very ill usage; I've reason to complain of your behaviour: this is not fair.

Cathos. How now! what's the matter wi'ye?

Mascarille. What! both against my heart at the same time, attacking me right and left? ha! — 'tis contrary to the law of nations, 'tis not an equal match, and I shall cry out murder.

Cathos. It must be own'd he says things in a particular manner.

Magdalen. He has an admirable turn of wit.

Cathos. You are more afraid than hurt, and your heart complains before 'tis wounded.

Mascarille. What the duce! 'tis wounded from head to foot.

SCENE X.

CATHOS, MAGDALEN, MASCARILLE, MAROT.

MAROT.

MADAM, somebody asks to see you.

Magdalen. Who?

Marot. The viscount Jodelet.

Mascarille. The viscount Jodelet?

Marot. Yes, Sir.

Cathos. Do you know him?

Mascarille. He's my best friend.

Magdalen. Conduct him in immediately.

Mascarille. 'Tis some time since we have seen one another, and I'm overjoy'd at this accident.

Cathos. Here he is.

SCENE XI.

CATHOS, MAGDALEN, JODELET, MASCARILLE, MAROT, ALMANZOR.

MASCARILLE.

AH, viscount!

Jodelet [Embracing one another.] Ah, marquiss!

Mascarille. How glad I am to meet you!

Jodelet. What joy I have to see you here!

Mascarille. Kiss me again a little, prithee.

Magdalen to Cathos.] We begin to be known, my dearest, see the *beau monde* find the way to visit us.

Mascarille. Ladies, give me leave to present this gentleman to you. Upon my word he deserves your knowledge.

Jodelet. 'Tis but just to come and render you what one owes, and your charms demand their sovereign rights from all sorts of people.

Magdalen. This is to drive your civilities even to the borders of flattery.

Cathos. This day ought to be mark'd in our almanac, as a very happy day.

Magdalen to Almanzor.] Come, boy, must things be always told you over and over? don't you see there must be the addition of a chair?

Mascarille. Don't wonder to behold the viscount in this manner, he's but just recover'd of an illness, which has made his visage pale, as you see.

Jodelet. 'Tis the fruit of court attendance, and the fatigues of war.

Mascarille. D'ye know, ladies, that in the viscount

you behold one of the bravest men of the age? — he's a perfect hero.

Jodelet. Marquiss, you're not behind hand with me; we know also what you can do.

Mascarille. 'Tis true, we have seen one another upon occasion.

Jodelet. And in places where it was very warm.

Mascarille looking at Cathos and Magdalen.] Ay, but not so warm as 'tis here. Ha, ha, ha.

Jodelet. Our acquaintance was made in the army, and the first time we saw each other, he commanded a regiment of horse aboard the galleys of Malta.

Mascarille. 'Tis true; but for all that, you was before me in the service; and I remember, that I was but a little officer when you commanded two thousand horse.

Jodelet. War is a fine thing; but, faith, the court now-a-days rewards people that are of service like as very ill.

Mascarille. That's the reason I'll hang up my sword.

Cathos. For my part, I've a furious tenderness for men of the sword.

Magdalen. I love them too; but I'd have wit to temper bravery.

Mascarille. Do you remember, viscount, that half moon we carry'd from the enemy at the siege of Arras.

Jodelet. What d'ye mean by an half-moon? it was a whole moon, indeed.

Mascarille. I think you're right.

Jodelet. I ought, faith, to remember it very well; I was there wounded in the leg by the burst of a grana-
do, of which I still carry the marks about me: feel a little, pray; you'll be sensible what a wound it was.

Cathos putting her hand to the place.] The scar is large, truly.

Masfcarille. Give me your hand a moment, and feel this: there just in the back part of my head. Are you at it?

Magdalen. Ay, I feel something.

Masfcarille. 'Tis a musket-shot which I receiv'd the last campaign I made.

Jodelet opening his bosom.] Here's a wound which went quite through me at the attack of Graveling.

Masfcarille putting his hand upon the button of his breeches.] I'm going to shew you a furious wound.

Magdalen. There's no occasion for't, we believe you without feeling it.

Masfcarille. They are honourable marks, that shew what a body is.

Cachos. We make no doubt of what you are.

Masfcarille. Viscount, have you your coach there?

Jodelet. Why?

Masfcarille. We'll carry the ladies to take a walk without the gates, and give them a collation.

Magdalen. We can't go abroad to-day.

Masfcarille. Let's have fiddles then and dance.

Jodelet. Faith, that's well thought of.

Magdalen. As for that we consent to it: but then there must be some addition of company.

Masfcarille. Who's there? — Champagne, Picard, Bourgognon, Casquarat, Basque, la Verdure, Lorrain, Provençal, Violette. — I wish all footmen were at the devil! — I don't think there's a gentleman in France worse serv'd than I. These rascals always leave me alone.

Magdalen. Almanzor, tell the servants of my lord marquis to go look for music, and fetch us the gentlemen and ladies hereabouts, to people the solitude of our ball.

[Exit Almanzor.]

Masfcarille. Viscount, what say you of these eyes?

Jodelet. Why, marquiss, what d'ye think of them yourself?

Mascarille. I? I say, that our liberty will have much ado to get away clear from hence. At least, for my part, I receive strange pulls, and my heart is held only by one thread.

Magdalen. How natural is all he says! he turns things the most agreeably in the world.

Cathos. Really, he's at a furious expence of wit.

Mascarille. To shew you I'm in earnest, I'll make an extempore upon it. [He muses.

Cathos. O! I conjure you by all my soul holds sacred, let's have something made upon us.

Jodelet. I should be glad to do as much for you; but I find myself a little inconvenienc'd in the poetic vein, by the quantity of blood which for some days past I have caus'd to be taken from me.

Mascarille. What the devil is the matter? I always make the first verse well, but I'm perplex'd about the rest. Faith, this is a little too hasty, I'll make you an extempore at my leisure, which you'll find to be the finest in the world.

Jodelet. He's as witty as the devil.

Magdalen. His wit's gallant and finely turn'd.

Mascarille. Viscount, tell me, is it long since you saw the countess?

Jodelet. 'Tis above three weeks since I paid her a visit.

Mascarille. D'ye know that the duke came to see me this morning, and would have taken me into the country a stag-hunting with him?

Magdalen. Here come our friends.

SCENE XII.

LUCILIA, CELIMENA, CATHOS, MAGDALEN,
MASCARILLE, JODELET, MAROT, ALMAN-
ZOR, and FIDLERS.

MAGDALEN.

LARD! my dears! we ask your pardon. These gentlemen had a fancy to put life into our heels, and we sent to seek for you to fill the emptiness of our assembly.

Lucilia. You have oblig'd us certainly.

Mascarille. This is here only a ball of a sudden; but one of these days we'll give you one in form. Are the fiddlers come?

Almanzor. Yes, Sir, they're here.

Cathos. Come then, my dears, take your places.

Mascarille dancing alone by way of prelude.] La, la, la, la, la, la, la, la.

Magdalen. He has a shape perfectly elegant.

Cathos. And he looks as if he could dance finely.

Mascarille, having taken out Magdalen to dance.] My liberty is going to dance a contrant as well as my heels. Play in time, fiddlers, in time. O what ignorant wretches! there's no dancing with them. The devil take ye, can't ye play in measure? La, la, la, la, la, la, la, la. Silence, ye country scrapers!

Jodelet, dancing afterwards.] Hold, don't play so fast, I'm but just recover'd of a fit of illness.

S C E N E XIII.

DU CROISY, LA GRANGE, CATHOS, MAGDALEN, LUCILIA, CELIMENA, JODELET, MASCARILLE, MAROT, and FIDLERS.

LA GRANGE, a stick in his hand.

A H, ah, rogues, what d'ye do here? 'tis three hours we've been looking for you.

Mascarille, feeling himself beaten] O! o! o! you did not tell me the blows should be thus.

Jodelet. O! o! o!

La Grange. 'Tis fit for you, indeed, rascal as you are, to pretend to be a man of consequence.

Du Croisy. This will teach you to know yourself.

S C E N E XIV.

CATHOS, MAGDALEN, LUCILIA, CELIMENA, MASCARILLE, JODELET, MAROT and FIDLERS.

MAGDALEN.

WHAT is the meaning of this?

Jodelet. 'Tis a wager.

Cathos. What, let yourselves be beaten in this manner?

Mascarille. Lard, I would not be seen to take any notice of it; because I am violent, and should not have been able to command myself.

Magdalen. To suffer an affront like this in our presence!

Mascarille. 'Tis nothing, let's not leave off. We've

known one another a long while, and amongst friends one should not take pet for so small a matter.

SCENE XV.

DU CROISY, LA GRANGE, MAGDALEN, CATHOS, LUCILIA, CELIMENA, MASCARILLE, JODELET, MAROT, and FIDLERs.

LA GRANGE.

FAITH, rascals, you shall not laugh at us, I promise you.—Come in, you there.

[Three or four bullies enter.

Magdalen. What means this impudence, to come and disturb us thus in our own house?

Du Croisy. What, ladies, shall we bear to have our footmen receiv'd better than ourselves? Shall they come to make love to you at our expence, and present you with a ball?

Magdalen. Your footmen?

La Grange. Ay, our footmen; 'tis neither decent nor honest to debauch them for us, as you do.

Magdalen. O heaven! what insolence!

La Grange. But they shall not have the advantage of our clothes to dazzle your eyes; if you will love them, it shall be, faith, for their handsome looks. Quick, let them be strip'd immediately.

Jodelet. Farewel finery.

Mascarille. The marquissate and viscountship are at an end.

Du Croisy. Ah, ah, rascals, have you the impudence to interfere with us. You shall seek wherewithal to

make yourselves agreeable to your mistresses somewhere else, I assure you.

La Grange. 'Tis too much to supplant us, and that with our own clothes.

Mascarille. O fortune! how great is thy inconsistency?

Du Croisy. Quick, take every thing away from them.

La Grange. Carry away these clothes, begone with them. Now, ladies, in the condition they are, you may continue your amours with them as long as you please; we leave you intirely at liberty as to that, and this gentleman and I protest, we'll be in no wise jealous.

S C E N E XVI.

MAGDALEN, CATHOS, JODELET, MASCARILLE, and FIDLERS.

CATHOS.

AH! what confusion!

Magdalen. I burst with vexation.

r. Fidler to Mascarille.] What's the meaning of this? who must pay us?

Mascarille. Ask my lord the viscount.

r. Fidler to Jodelet.] Who's to give us the money?

Jodelet. Ask my lord the marquiss.

SCENE XVII.

GORGIBUS, MAGDALEN, CATHOS, JO-
DELET, MASCARILLE, and FIDLERS.

GORGIBUS.

AH! baggages as you are, you have brought us in-
to a rare condition, by what I can find; I've heard in-
deed of your fine doings from those gentlemen and ladies
that went out just now.

Magdalen. Ah, father! 'tis a cruel trick they've play'd
us.

Gorgibus. Ay, 'tis a cruel trick; but 'tis the effect of
your impertinence, you wretches. They've shewn their
resentment for the usage you gave them; and yet un-
happy that I am, I must put up the affront.

Magdalen. Ah! I swear we'll be reveng'd, or I shall
die with the vexation of it. And you, rascals, dare you
continue here after your insolence?

Mascarille. D'ye use a marquiss thus? This is the
way of the world, the least disgrace makes us be slighted
by those that before caressed us. Come along, brother,
let's go seek our fortune somewhere else; I see they
like nothing here but insignificant out-side, and have no
regard for naked virtue.

SCENE THE LAST.

GORGIBUS, MAGDALEN, CATHOS,
and FIDLERS.

I. FIDLER.

SIR, we expect that you should satisfy us, since they don't, for 'twas here we play'd.

Gorgibus beating them.] Ay, ay, I'll satisfy ye, and here's the coin I'll pay ye in. And you, ye baggages, I don't know what should hinder me from doing as much for you; we shall become the common talk and ridicule of every body, and this is what you have brought upon yourselves, by your extravagances. Go hide yourselves, ye villains, go hide yourselves for ever. [alone.] And you that are the occasion of their folly, stupid trumpery, mischievous amusements for idle minds, ye romances, verses, songs, sonnets, and sonatas, the devil take ye all.

MA 55
THE END.

DON GARCIA

DON GARCIA

OF

NAVARRÉ:

OR, THE

JEALOUS PRINCE.

A HEROIC COMEDY.

THE ROMANTIC DARIEN
SCENE THE LAST
GORGON, MRS. DALLAN, CATHOLIC
IN THE DARIEN
A I O A B D O N
A C T O R S.

DON GARCIA, Prince of Navarre, in love with Elvira.
ELVIRA, Princess of Leon.

DON ALPHONSO, Prince of Leon, thought to be the
prince of Castile, under the name of Don Silvio.

AGNESA, a countess, in love with Don Silvio, belov'd
by Moorgat, the usurper of the state of Leon.

ELIZA, confident to Elvira.

DON ALVAREZ, confident of Garcia, in love with Eliza.

DON LOPEZ, another confident of Don Garcia, in love
with Eliza.

DON PEDRO, gentleman-usher to Agnesa.

A PAGE to Elvira.



SCENE lies in Agnesa, a city of Spain,
in the kingdom of Leon.

DON GARCIA

OF

NAVARRRE.

ACT I. SCENE I.

ELVIRA, ELIZA.

ELVIRA.

NO, I have no choice to regulate the secret sentiments of my heart with regard to these two lovers; the prince, be he what he may, has nothing in him to make me prefer his passion. Don Silvio, as well as he, is possess'd of all the qualities of a glorious hero. The great virtues of both, join'd to their equal birth, frequently induce me to speak, sometimes in favour of the one, sometimes in favour of the other: and if nothing but merit were to plead a right to my heart, the conqueror were yet to be named. But heaven will have it otherwise, and entirely weighs down the scale on the side of don Garcia.

Eliza. The love which your stars inspire you with for him, seems hitherto to have had but a weak sway over your soul, since you could so long, madam, suspend your resolutions between the two rivals.

Elvira. The amorous pursuit of these noble competitors has occasion'd very uneasy conflicts in my breast. When I look'd on the one, I found no reason to re-

strain the tender bias of my soul that way : but when the sacrifice of the other presented itself to my thoughts, I chid the former movement of my soul as an act of injustice, and was of opinion D. Silvio deserv'd a happier destiny. I likewise reflected upon the obligations which a daughter of the late king of Leon seem'd to have to the blood of Castile, and the strict friendship which had long knit together the interests of his father and mine. Thus in proportion, as the one made advances in my affection, I lamented the ill success of the other. My pity, complacent to his burning sighs, amus'd his desires with a favourable outside, and with that small advantage was willing to make amends for the secret obstructions he met with in my heart.

Eliza. But since you have been inform'd of his first passion, you ought to free your spirits from such torture. Before he fell in love with you, donna Agnesa had receiv'd the homage of his heart ; and she being in intimate friendship with you, and having reveal'd the secret to you, there is a fair opportunity for you to disengage yourself, and you may without fear cover your repulse of him under the pretext of friendship to her.

Elvira. 'Tis true, I have reason to be pleas'd with the news of don Silvio's infidelity ; since my heart, that is thus tyranniz'd over by these weaknesses, now sees itself at liberty to act against him, and can justly refuse his addresses, and, without scruple, bestow it's suffrage on others. But yet what pleasure does this administer to me, if it endures the rigors of another sort of constraint ? If the continual weakness of a jealous prince receives my tender regards unworthily, and will infallibly oblige me to break off all correspondence with him ?

Eliza. But is it a crime in him not to give credit to his

his happiness, since he has not been made acquainted with it from your own mouth? And does not that which flatters his rival's hopes, authorize him to suspect your affection?

Elvira. No, nothing can excuse the unaccountable frenzy of his extravagant jealousy: and I have but too well inform'd him, by my actions, that he is not excluded from my secret good wishes. There are other interpreters of one's thoughts besides the tongue. A sigh, a look, a blush, or silence itself, is enough to explain the secret impulses of a heart. In love, every thing speaks, and in this case every ray is a sun; since the honour of our sex forbids us to discover all we feel. I have, I own, endeavour'd to carry things with an even hand between them, and to behold their merits with an impartial eye; but how vainly do we strive against our wishes, and how easy is it to perceive the difference between those favours that are bestow'd out of policy; and such as proceed from the inclination of the heart? The one seems always forc'd; but, alas! the other are done without thinking on't; like to those pure and limpid streams, which, without violence, flow from their native sources. In vain did my pity towards don Silvio strive to move me; it's insufficiency soon discover'd itself; whilst my very looks always told the prince more than I desir'd they should.

Eliza. Though the suspicions of that illustrious lover have no foundation, they are at least the signs of a soul well affected; and there are those who would rejoice at what gives you pain. Jealousy may be odious when it proceeds from a love which is not agreeable to us: but when we love the person that loves us, such alarms in him should increase our pleasure. That is the best way

he can express his passion, and the more jealous he is, we ought to love him the more. Therefore since in your soul a magnanimous prince —

Elvira. Ah! do not advance such a strange maxim. jealousy is at all times an odious monster, nothing can sweeten it's injurious attacks; and the dearer the object is to us, the more sensible we are to the affront. To see a choleric prince every moment throwing off that respect which love inspires his real votaries with; to see him, I say, in his jealous fits quarrelling alike with my pleasures and my disgusts; and explaining every thing I say or do in favour of a rival! No, no, these suspicions are too offensive; I tell you my thoughts without dissimulation. I own the prince don Garcia is the man I love: in the midst of Leon his bravery has given me a noble proof of his flame, by defying on my account, the greatest dangers, and rescuing me from the designs of our impious tyrants; and by securing me against the horrors of an unworthy match. Nor will I deny, but that I should have been sorry to have ow'd my deliverance to any but him; for an enamour'd heart feels an extreme pleasure, Eliza, when it knows itself indebted to what it loves; and it's timorous flame assumes more vigour, and shines out stronger, when, by the means of favours, it thinks it satisfies it's obligations. Yes, I'm glad that the hazarding his life for me, seems to give his passion a right of conquest: I rejoice that the danger I was in threw me into his hands: and if the common reports be true, and heaven should grant my brother to return, my most ardent wishes are, that his arm my aid my brother in the recovery of his throne, and that he may, by the fortunate successes of an heroic valour, merit all manner of acknowledgement at my

hand. But for all this, if he continues to incite my anger, if he does not lay aside his jealousy, and subject himself to what laws I shall prescribe, he in vain aspires to the possession of donna Elvira. Hymen can never join us, for I abhor those bands which promise nothing but a certain hell to both of us.

Eliza. He is a prince, madam, that I'm sure will conform himself to your desires; and they are so well explain'd in this letter, that when he receives it —

Elvira. I won't have it sent, Eliza, now I think on't: it will be better to execute that affair by word of mouth. The favour of a writing leaves in a lover's hands too flagrant testimonies of our inclination. Therefore take care that letter be not deliver'd to the prince.

Eliza. Your will ought to be follow'd as a law; yet I can't help wondering that heaven should throw such diversity into people's minds, and that what some look upon as an outrage, should be esteem'd and desired by others. For my part, I should think myself very fortunate if I had a lover that could be jealous, for his uneasiness would be my satisfaction. And the very thing that I can't digest, is to see D. Alvarez give himself no disquiet —

Elvira. We did not think he was so near us: see, he comes.

SCENE II.

ELVIRA, D. ALVAREZ, ELIZA.

ELVIRA.

YOUR return surprizes me: what's the news? Is D. Alphonso coming, are we to expect him?

D. Alvarez. Yes, madam, the time is come in which that brother, brought up in Castile, is to re-enter into the possession of his own. Hitherto D. Louis, to whose prudence his infancy was committed by the late king, has concealed his quality from the eyes of the whole state, to save him from the fury of the traitor Moorgat; and though the tyrant has often inquired for him, under pretence of surrendering his place to him, yet would he never trust the dangerous bait of his sham-equity. But the people being incens'd at that violence, which an unjust power would have offer'd you, that generous old man thought it a proper time to try the success of a twenty years expectation. He has sound'd Leon, and his faithful emissaries have practis'd upon the minds both of great and small. Whilst Castile was arming ten thousand men to restore that prince to the wishes of his people, he first causes his fame to be spread abroad, and will not shew him but at the head of an army, and completely ready to launch the avenging thunder on the vile usurper's head. Leon is besieg'd, and D. Silvio in person commands the succour which his father gives you.

Elvira. So powerful a succour may justly flatter our hopes; but I'm afraid my brother will be too much oblig'd to him.

D. Alvarez. But, madam, is it not strange that notwithstanding the storm which threatens the usurper, all the advices from Leon confirm, that he is going to marry the countess Agnesa?

Elvira. He seeks to strengthen his interest by the alliance of that illustrious maid, whose family is very numerous and powerful; I have of late heard nothing from her, I am disturb'd at it. But she was always averse to that tyrant.

Eliza. She is under other engagements of honour and affection, too powerful to —

D. Alvarez. The prince is entering.

SCENE III.

D. GARCIA, DONNA ELVIRA, D. ALVAREZ, ELIZA.

D. GARCIA. I COME, madam, to rejoice with you for the good news that is brought. That brother who threatens death to the infamous tyrant, gives, at the same time, hopes to my love, and offers to my arm a welcome occasion of exposing myself to fresh dangers for your sake. If heaven proves propitious to me, this right-hand shall lay the infidel breathless at your feet, and restore to your family its former dignity. But what pleases me yet more is, that the stars have restored you this brother to be king; for so my love may shine out, without any imputation, as if by means of your person, I only sought to gain myself a crown. Yes, my heart would demonstrate to the eyes of the whole world, that in you it considers nothing but you; and if I may speak it without offence, it's wishes have a hundred times arm'd themselves against your birth; their indiscreet zeal have wish'd your divine charms the inheritance of an humbler lot, to the end that the noble sacrifice of this same heart might repair heaven's injustice to you; and that you might owe to the hands of my love, all that you owe to your birth. But since heaven deprives me of that advantage, be pleas'd to let my amorous flames take some

hope from his death, whom I prepare to encounter, and suffer me by faithful services to dispose the minds of a brother, and a whole nation to be favourable to me.

Elvira. I know, prince, that by espousing our cause, you can make a hundred glorious exploits speak in favour of your love. But the favour of a brother, and of a nation are not sufficient to crown your hopes; Elvira is not the prize of that attempt, and there's yet a stronger obstacle to surmount.

D. Garcia. Yes, madam, I know what you mean, I know very well that my heart fights in vain for you; neither am I ignorant of the powerful obstacle, though you name it not.

Elvira. What is well meant, is often ill taken. Too much heat, prince, may betray us into mistakes: but since I must speak, I'll speak. Would you know when you may expect to please me, and when you may entertain some hope?

D. Garcia. That, madam, I should count an extreme favour.

Elvira. When you know how to love as you ought.

D. Garcia. Alas, madam, can any thing under the cope of heaven equal the passion your eyes have inspired me with?

Elvira. When your passion gives me no occasion of disgust.

D. Garcia. That is it's greatest study.

Elvira. When you shall cease to harbour mean unworthy sentiments of me.

D. Garcia. I love you to adoration.

Elvira. When you have made reparation for your unjust umbrage, and banish'd that hideous monster which poisons your love; that jealous humour the caprice of

which prejudices the addressee you offer me, and aims me against them with just indignation.

D. Garcia. Alas! madam, it is true, that notwithstanding my utmost effort, some remains of jealousy do cleave to my heart, and that a rival at some distance from your charming person, does disturb my quiet. Whether it be through caprice or reason, I always fancy that you are uneasy for his absence, and that in spite of my assiduities, your sighs are continually sent forth in search of that too happy man. But if my suspicions give you occasion of displeasure, alas, you may easily cure me of them: their banishment depends more on you than me, yes, you are she that can arm my soul against jealousy, and dissipate all the horrors which that monster has spread in it. Dign therefore to resolve the doubt that oppresses me, and with one kind confession from your adorable mouth, assure me of that which my utmost diligence has been unable to find out.

Elvira. Prince, the tyranny of your suspicions is great. A heart would be understood at the least intimation, and does not love the importunity of those flames which require such particular explications. The first movement which our souls manifest ought to satisfy a discreet lover. If it were left to my choice, I know not whether I should pitch upon D. Silvio or yourself: but the very desiring to constrain you not to be jealous, might have given some information to any one but you; I thought that rule might have given you light enough, without needing to say any thing further; and yet your love is dissatisfied, and requires a more ample declaration: I must, it seems, in express terms say I love you, nay, I know not but I must swear it too.

D. Garcia. Well, madam, I own I am too bold: I

ought to acquiesce in what pleases you; I desire no further information; I believe you are not without some little compassion for me, and that I'm happier than I deserve to be. 'Tis done, I renounce my jealous suspicions; the sentence which condemns them is a very agreeable sentence; and I receive the law thereby prescribed to free my heart from their unjust empire.

Elvira. You promise a great deal, prince, and I very much doubt whether you can put that force upon yourself.

D. Garcia. Ah! madam, to render me credible, 'tis enough that what is promised to you ought to be inviolable; because the felicity of obeying you renders every thing easy. May heaven declare eternal war against me, may its thunder strike me dead at your feet, or which is worse, may your wrath be pour'd on me, if ever my love descends to such weakness as to fail in the duties of that promise; if ever any jealous transport in my soul —

SCENE IV.

ELVIRA, D. GARCIA, D. ALVAREZ, ELIZA.

[Page presenting a letter to Elvira.]

ELVIRA.

I WAS in pain, and you oblige me very much: let the messenger wait.

SCENE V.

ELVIRA, D. GARCIA, D. ALVAREZ, ELIZA.

ELVIRA low and aside.

DO not I see by his looks that this letter disturbs him? Prodigious effect of his jealous temper! What is it stops you in the middle of your oath, prince? [aloud.

D. Garcia. I thought you might have some secret together, and I was unwilling to interrupt you.

Elvira. Methinks the tone of your voice is very much altered, and a sort of wildness appears in your eyes; this sudden change surprizes me; whence should it proceed? may one know?

D. Garcia. A sudden sickness at heart.

Elvira. Such illnesses are but too frequent: some present remedy would be necessary; but, are you often thus?

D. Garcia. Sometimes.

Elvira. Alas, frail prince! here let this writing cure your distemper, 'tis no where-but in the mind!

D. Garcia. That writing, madam! no, my hand refuses it: I know your thoughts, and what you accuse me of, if —

Elvira. Read it, I tell you, and satisfy yourself.

D. Garcia. That you may afterwards call me weak, jealous; no, no, I'll convince you that this letter has given me no uneasiness, and to justify myself, I will not read it, though you are pleased to permit me.

Elvira. If you persist in your refusal, I should be in the wrong to force you; 'tis sufficient I let you see whose hand it is.

D. Garcia. My will ought always to submit to yours ; if 'tis your pleasure I should read it for you, I gladly take the employment upon me.

Elvira. Yes, yes, prince, take it ; you shall read it for me.

D. Garcia. To obey you, madam ; and I may say—

Elvira. What you please ; pray dispatch.

D. Garcia. It comes from donna Agnesa, I perceive.

Elvira. It does so ; and I'm glad of it, both for your sake and mine.

D. Garcia reads.] “ In spite of all contempt, the
“ tyrant persists in his love to me ; and the more ef-
“ fectually to compass his ends, has, since your absence,
“ turn'd on me all that violence with which he pursued
“ the match between yourself and his son. Those who
“ can claim any power over me do all approve this un-
“ worthy proposal, being inspired by the base motives of
“ false honour. I do not know as yet where my per-
“ secution will end. But I will die sooner than consent.
“ May you, fair Elvira, enjoy a gentler destiny.”

D. AGNESA.

Her soul is endued with a wondrous virtue.

Elvira. I will go and write an answer to this illustrious friend. Mean while, prince, learn to arm yourself better against such accidents. I have calm'd your tempest this time, and the thing has pass'd mildly off : but, perhaps, I may not be in a humour to do so again.

D. Garcia. What ? you think then —

Elvira. I think what I ought : adieu, do not forget my advice ; and if your love of me be really so great as you pretend, let me see such proofs of it as I expect.

D. Garcia. Depend upon it, I intend nothing more than to obey you ; and sooner than fail in it, I will lose my life.

ACT II. SCENE I.

ELIZA, D. LOPEZ.

ELIZA.

TO speak my mind freely to you, I do not much wonder at what the prince does; because a soul inflam'd by a noble passion can hardly help being sometimes transported with jealousy; that it's wishes should be cross'd by frequent doubts is very natural, and I must approve of it; but what surprizes me, D. Lopez, is to hear that you prepare his suspicions for him, that you are the contriver of them; that he is only jealous with your eyes, and only disturb'd by your cares. In short, I say again, D. Lopez, I do not wonder at the fears and suspicions of a well inflam'd lover, but that a man who is not in love, should have all the anxieties of one that's jealous, is a novelty that belongs to none but you.

D. Lopez. As for that matter, let every body comment as they please: each man regulates his conduct according to the aim he proposes to himself; and since my love was rejected by you, I study to make my best court to the prince.

Eliza. But know ye not that he will make his court but ill, if you continue to cherish this humour in him?

D. Lopez. And pray was it ever known, charming Eliza, that those about great men ever minded any thing but their own interest? Did a perfect courtier ever take it in his head to increase a prince's retinue by a censurer of faults in them, or disturb himself about their true interest, provided he could but make a fortune out of

them? All such a one aims at is to get into their favour the shortest way, which is by flattering their infirmities, blindly applauding what they have a mind to do, and never espousing any thing that may displease them; that's the true secret of being well with them. Wholesome counsels make a man look'd on as a troublesome fellow, and throw him out of that confidence which an artful complaisance had at first let him into; in short, we always see that the art of courtiers is to make an advantage of the foibles of the great, and to cherish their errors, not reprove them.

Eliza. These maxims may do well enough for a time; but there are such things as reverses of fortune. A gleam of light may at last strike through the prepossession of the abus'd great, who then will severely revenge on all such flatterers the wrong done to their glory. Mean while, I must tell you, you have been too open in explaining your politics; and a true account of your motives laid before the prince, would be but an indifferent help to the making your fortune.

D. Lopez. Besides having it in my power to deny all I've said, I know very well that Eliza is too discreet to divulge this private conversation. After all, what have I said that is not known by every body? And what have I occasion to conceal in this my proceeding? A fall may justly be apprehended when we make use of tricking or treason. But what have I to dread, who can't be tax'd with any thing but a little complaisance, and who do but follow the prince's natural inclination to jealousy? His soul seems to live upon suspicions, and so I make it my study to find occasions for his disquiet, to look out sharp on all sides, for matter to furnish out a secret conversation. And when I can go to

him full of a piece of news that may give some mortal stab to his repose, then he loves me most, and I can see him greedily swallow the poison, and thank me for it too, as if I had brought him news of some victory, that crown'd him with glory and felicity. But my rival appears, and so I leave you together; and though I have renounced all hopes of ever possessing you, yet it would pain me not a little to see you prefer him to me, before my face; and therefore I will avoid as much as I can such a mortification.

Eliza. All judicious lovers should do the like.

SCENE II.

D. ALVAREZ, ELIZA.

D. ALVAREZ.

WE have at length received intelligence that the king of Navarre has this day declar'd himself in favour of the prince's love, and that a fresh reinforcement of troops is ready to be employ'd in the service of her to whom his wishes aspire. For my part I'm amaz'd at the suddenness of their advances — But —

SCENE III.

D. GARCIA, ELIZA, D. ALVAREZ.

D. GARCIA.

WHAT is the princess doing?

Eliza. I presume, my lord, she's writing letters; but she shall know you are here.

D. Garcia. I will wait till she has done.

SCENE IV.

D. GARCIA alone.

BEING so near seeing her, I feel my soul shaken by an unusual disturbance ; fear, mixt with resentment, diffuses a sudden trembling all over me. Take heed, D. Garcia, lest a blind caprice lead thee to some precipice ; and lest the powerful disorders of thy mind betray thee into a too confident belief of thy senses. Consult thy reason, take her for thy guide ; see whether the appearance of thy suspicions be solid, do not reject their voice ; but yet beware they don't impose upon thee to believe them too much, that they don't give too much into thy first transports : read sedately again, and again this moiety of a letter. Ha ! what would I not give for the other half ! But after all, this one is more than enough to convince me of my misfortune.

Though your rival —

You ought however —

And it is in your power to —

The greatest obstacle —

I have a tender sense of —

In rescuing me from the hands —

His love, his devoirs —

But he is odious to me, with —

Purge therefore your flame from —

Merit the regards that are —

And when people promise —

Do not obstinately refuse —

Yes my destiny is sufficiently legible in these characters; her heart as well as her hand makes itself known by this; and the imperfect meanings of these fatal words have no need of the remainder to unfold them. Let us however carry it fair at first, and conceal our resentment from the faithless woman: let us confound her with the same arts she makes use of. She comes; reason contain my transports, and for a time be mistress of my outside.

S C E N E V.

E L V I R A, D. G A R C I A.

E L V I R A.

YOU will pardon me for making you stay.

D. Garcia low and aside.] How well she dissembles!

Elvira. We have just now heard that the king your father approves your designs, and consents that his son should restore us to our subjects. I am extremely rejoic'd at it.

D. Garcia. Yes, madam, and my heart is rejoic'd at it too: but —

Elvira. The tyrant will doubtless find it difficult to screen himself from the thunder which is from all parts threatening him; and I dare flatter myself that the same courage which was able to deliver me from his brutish rage, and set me safe within the walls of Astorga, will, by the conquest of Leon, put an end to that monster's tyranny.

D. Garcia. The success will, in a little time, shew that. But pray let us proceed to some other discourse:

may I be bold as to beg you to tell me, madam, what person you have written to, since fate conducted us to this place?

Elvira. Why this question? And whence does your concern arise?

D. Garcia. Pure curiosity, madam, that's all.

Elvira. Curiosity is the daughter of jealousy.

D. Garcia. No, there's nothing of what you imagine. Your commands do sufficiently restrain me from that evil.

Elvira. Without searching further into the reasons of your inquiry, I have written twice to the countess, at Leon, and as often to the marquiss D. Louis, at Burgos: Are you satisfy'd with this?

D. Garcia. Have you written to none else, madam?

Elvira. No certainly. This discourse amazes me.

D. Garcia. Pray, consider well with yourself before you deny it. Because for want of recollection, people are often perjurd.

Elvira. My mouth can't in this be perjurd.

D. Garcia. It is, however, guilty of a very great falsehood.

Elvira. Prince!

D. Garcia. Madam!

Elvira. Heavens! what means this extravagance! Say, have you lost your senses?

D. Garcia. Yes, yes, I lost them, when, to my misfortune, I suck'd in the poison of your love, and when I expected to meet with some sincerity in those treacherous charms that bewitch'd me.

Elvira. What treachery have you to complain of?

D. Garcia. Ah! double heart! how well she understands the art of feigning! But every door is shut against her; no hole left to creep out at: here look on

this, and confess your hand. This piece of a letter is enough to shew for whom you employ'd this stile?

Elvira. Is this the occasion of your disturbance?

D. Gracia. Do not you blush at this writing?

Elvira. Innocence is not accusom'd to blush.

D. Garcia. Here indeed we see it oppress'd, you will deny the letter, because it wants a superscription —

Elvira. Why deny it? 'tis my own hand writing—

D. Garcia. 'Tis much you would own it; but you'll say, I'll warrant, that it was a billet written to some indifferent person, or at least that the tender sentiments it contains were only meant to some she-friend or kinswoman.

Elvira. No; I writ it to a lover, and what's more, to a beloved lover.

D. Garcia. And may I, perfidious —

Elvira. Bridle, unworthy prince, the excess of your base fury: though I do not owe obedience to any in this place, and am accountable to none but myself, yet for your sole punishment I will clear myself from the crime you insolently charge me with. You shall be undeceiv'd, don't doubt it. I have my defence at hand. My innocence shall be made to appear perfectly clear, you yourself shall be the judge in your own cause, and shall be forc'd to pronounce your own sentence yourself.

D. Garcia. I can't comprehend this mystery.

Elvira. You shall soon comprehend it to your cost. Eliza, come hither.

SCENE VI.

D. GARCIA, ELVIRA, ELIZA.

ELIZA.

MADAM.

[Elvira to D. Garcia.] Observe well whether I make use of any artifice to deceive you, whether by one sole motion of the eye or any instructive gesture of body. I seek to ward off this sudden blow. [To Eliza.] Answer me quickly, where left you the letter I writ just now?

Eliza. Madam, I confess I am to blame; I know not how it happen'd, but 'twas left on my table, and I this very moment heard that don Lopez coming into my apartment, with his usual liberty, fell to ransacking up and down, and met with this letter. As he was unfolding it, Eleonor goes to snatch it from him before he had read any of it; and in the contest the letter was torn just in two parts, one of which don Lopez ran away with in spite of all she could do.

Elvira. Have you the other part?

Eliza. Yes, here it is, madam.

Elvira. Give it me, [to D. Garcia.] and we'll see who's to blame; here join this to that you have, and then read it; I will hear it.

D. Garcia. To the prince don Garcia. Hah!

Elvira. Go on; are you thunder-struck at the first word?

D. Garcia reads.] " Though your rival, prince, gives
" you alarms, you ought, however, to fear yourself

" more than him, and it is in your power to destroy;
 " when you please, the greatest obstacle your passion
 " meets with. I have a tender sense of what don Gar-
 " cia did in rescuing me from the hands of our proud
 " ravishers; his love, his devoirs are grateful to me,
 " but he is odious to me with his jealousy. Purge,
 " therefore, your flame from that foul blemish; merit
 " the regards that are bestow'd upon you; and when
 " people promise to make you happy, do not obstinate-
 " ly refuse to do so yourself." ELVIRA.

Elvira. Well, what say you to this?

D. Garcia. Ah! madam, I am quite confounded.
 No punishment can be severe enough for me.

Elvira. Enough; know that I desir'd the letter should
 be read to you now, for no other purpose but to falsify
 your assertions, and that I might have an opportunity
 to unsay all that I find there in your favour. Adieu.

D. Garcia. Ah! madam, whither fly you?

Elvira. Where you shall never come, too jealous
 man.

D. Garcia. Ah! madam, excuse a miserable lover,
 who, by a prodigious turn of destiny, has incurr'd your
 indignation, and who yet had merited greater blame if
 he had continued quiet and unconcern'd. For in short,
 can a soul be truly enamour'd which does not mix fear
 with it's hope? And could you believe I had lov'd you,
 if I had been unalarm'd at this letter? If I had not
 trembled at the thunderbolt which I fancy'd had de-
 stroy'd all my happiness? I leave it to your own judg-
 ment; say, would not such an accident have thrown
 any other lover into my error? Alas! was it possible
 to withhold my assent to so clear a proof?

Elvira. Yes, you might have done it: my senti-

ments so clearly explain'd to you, might have secur'd your doubts: you had nothing to fear, and if some others had had such a pledge, they would have laugh'd at the testimony of the whole world.

D. Garcia. The less deserving we are of an expected benefit, with more difficulty we depend upon it; a destiny too full of glory seems slippery, and leaves to our suspicions an easy declivity. As for me, who so little deserve your goodness, I doubted of my happy fortune: I thought that being in a place of my jurisdiction, you forc'd yourself to be a little complaisant; that disguising to me your severity —

Elvira. And was I capable of stooping to such a mean shift! to make use of shameful fiction! to act upon motives of a servile fear! to betray my sentiments, and because I was in your power, to cover my disdain with a mask of favour! Could glory have so little empire over my heart! can you think so, and dare to tell me it? Know that this heart cannot debase itself; that nothing under heaven can force it to do it: and if, by this odd mistake, you have seen marks of a goodness you don't deserve, know that in spite of your power I can shew the hatred I resolve to have for you, defy your fury, and convince you that I was not guilty of any meanness, nor ever will be so.

D. Garcia. Well, I am guilty, I do not deny it; but I beg pardon of your divine charms, I beg it for the sake of the most lively flame that ever two fair eyes kindled in a human soul. But if your wrath cannot be pleas'd, if my crime is too great to be forgiven; if you do not look upon the love that caus'd it, nor the quick repentance which my heart manifests to you; I must then, by putting an end to my life, free myself

from these insupportable torments. No, think not that I can live a moment under your displeasure; already the barbarous length of that moment makes my heart sink under it's gnawing remorse, and the cruel woundings of a thousand vultures have nothing comparable to it's mortal pangs. Declare, madam, whether I am to expect any pardon, and this sword shall immediately, by a favourable blow, pierce the heart of a miserable wretch in your presence; that heart, that traitorous heart, whose perplexities have so greatly offended your extreme goodness: too happy in my death, if this just blow cancels in your mind the image of my crime; and leaves no mixture of your aversion in the weak remembrance of my affection: this is the only favour my loves begs of you.

Elvira. Ah! too cruel prince.

D. Garcia. Say, madam, speak.

Elvira. Ought I still to preserve my goodness to you, and suffer myself to be affronted by so many unworthy actions?

D. Garcia. A heart that's in love can never give an affront, and what love commits is excused by itself.

Elvira. Love does not excuse such rage.

D. Garcia. All it's ardor arises from it's movements, and the stronger it is the more difficulty it finds —

Elvira. No, speak to me no more of it; you deserve my hatred.

D. Garcia. You hate me then?

Elvira. I will at least endeavour to do it; but, alas! I am afraid 'twill be in vain, and that all the wrath your offence has excited will not be able to carry my revenge so far.

D. Garcia. Do not try the efforts of so great a pu-

nishment, since to revenge you I offer you my death; pronounce but the sentence, and I this instant obey you.

Elvira. They that know not how to hate, know much less how to kill.

D. Garcia. I cannot live unless your goodness grant a pardon to my rash errors; resolve either to punish or forgive.

Elvira. Alas! I have too well manifested what my resolutions are; is it not pardoning a criminal to tell him that one cannot hate him?

D. Garcia. Ah! it is too much. Suffer me, adorable princess —

Elvira. Forbear, I hate myself for my weakness.

D. Garcia alone.] At length I am —

SCENE VII.

D. GARCIA, D. LOPEZ.

D. LOPEZ.

MY lord, I'm come to inform you of a secret that may justly alarm your love.

D. Garcia. Come not to talk to me of secrets or alarms, in the charming transport I am in; after what I have just now seen, I ought not to listen to any suspicions; the unparallel'd goodness of a divine object ought to shut my ears against all such vain reports. Therefore no more of them.

D. Lopez. My lord, I shall do just as you please; I aim at nothing in all this, but your interest: I was of opinion that what I have discover'd, deserv'd to be communicated to you with all diligence; but since 'tis

your pleasure that I should not touch upon it, I shall tell you my lord, to change the discourse, that already every family in Leon has thrown off the mask on the rumour of the troops of Castile; and that the populace especially discover such an affection for their true king, that in all probability, makes the tyrant tremble for fear.

D. Garcia. Castile, however, shall not have the victory, without our endeavouring to share the glory of it; our troops likewise may be able to imprint some fear in the heart of Moorgat. But what is that secret you would inform me of? Let's hear't.

D. Lopez. My lord, I have nothing to say.

D. Garcia. Come, come, speak, I give you free leave.

D. Lopez. Your words, my lord, have inform'd me of too much for that; and since my news may displease you, I shall learn for the future how to hold my peace.

D. Garcia. Without further reply, I will absolutely know what it is.

D. Lopez. Your command must be obey'd; but, my lord, the duty of my zeal forbids me to explain such a secret in this place. Let us go from hence to inform you of it, and without giving yourself any trouble, you yourself shall judge what construction it will bear.

ACT III. SCENE I.

ELVIRA, ELIZA.

ELVIRA.

WHAT sayst thou, Eliza, to this unaccountable weakness in the heart of a princess? that I should so suddenly lay aside my resentment, and so shamefully pardon such a sensible affront.

Eliza. I say, madam, that an affront from the man we love, is doubtless very difficult to bear; but as there is nothing more exasperating, so neither is there any thing which we so soon pardon; and that an offender that's belov'd, if he does but throw himself at our feet, triumphs over all our anger; and so much the more easily, madam, if the offence proceeds from an excess of love. I don't, therefore, wonder to see your displeasure appeased, notwithstanding the provocation which has been given you, and I know what power, in spite of your menaces, will always pardon such faults.

Elvira. But know, Eliza, whatever power love has over me, I have blush'd for the last time; and if ever a fresh occasion be given to my anger, he must never more hope for a pardon; if I should happen to be touch'd upon again with a sentiment of tenderness, I will fortify myself against him with an oath; for in short, a spirit inspir'd with ever so little pride, is greatly asham'd to go back from it's word; and oftentimes, at the expence of a painful conflict, makes a gallant attempt upon it's own wishes, stands upon it's honour, and sacrifices every thing to the noble haughtiness of main-

maintaining it's word ; therefore by my having now pardon'd him, no judgment can be made of what yet may happen ; and whatever fortune may seem to prepare, I don't think I can be the prince of Navarre's, till he has manifested an entire cure of those gloomy fits which disturb him, and give me sufficient reason to believe that he will never relapse into the like affront again.

Eliza. But pray, madam, what affront is the jealousy of a lover to us ?

Elvira. There's nothing that deserves a severer resentment, and since we undergo so much when we are forc'd to confess we love, since the rigid honour of our sex opposes a mighty obstacle to such acknowledgements, ought a lover, when he sees us surmount that obstacle in his favour ; ought he, I say, with impunity to doubt that testimony ? And is he not highly to blame to disbelieve that which is never said without the greatest reluctance ?

Eliza. For my part, I am of opinion, that a little diffidence upon such occasions, has nothing in it that should offend us ; and that it is a dangerous thing, madam, for a lover to be absolutely persuaded that he is beloved. If —

Elvira. Let us argue no more about this ; every one thinks for themselves ; and in short, this is a scruple which my soul is offended with, and in spite of my desires, I feel I know not what within me that forebodes an eclaireissement between the prince and me, which, notwithstanding the resplendent merit of his virtue — But heavens ! what do I see ! Don Silvio of Castile !

SCENE II.

ELVIRA, D. ALPHONSO thought to be
D. Silvio, ELIZA.

ELVIRA.

MY lord, what fortune brought you hither?

D. Alphonso. I know, madam, that my arrival must be surprizing, and that to enter without noise into this town, whose access is render'd difficult by order of a rival, to escape being seen by the soldiers, is an accident you did not expect to meet with; but if in this I have surmounted some obstacles, the desire of seeing you is able to affect much greater miracles. My heart has felt inexpressible torments in being absent from you, and I was not able to deny myself any longer the sight of your inestimable person. I come, therefore, to tell you that I return thanks to heaven, that you're rescu'd from the hands of an odious tyrant; but in the midst of this happiness, 'tis the greatest torture to me to see that my rigorous fate envy'd me the honour of this illustrious action, and too unjustly offer'd to my rival the agreeable dangers of that piece of service. Yes, madam, my resolutions to break your chains would undoubtedly have been equal to his, and I should have gained this victory for you if heaven had not robb'd me of that honour.

Elvira. I know, my lord, that you have an heart capable of overcoming the greatest dangers, and I doubt not but that generous zeal which animates you to revenge my quarrel, would have been able to have done for me all that another hand has perform'd; but without this action which you was capable of I am sufficiently

oblig'd to the house of Castile. 'Tis well known what the count your father has done for the late king. After having assisted him to the last hour, he afforded in his dominions a safe sanctuary to my brother; full twenty years he conceal'd him from the barbarous rage of his enemies, and now to restore to his forehead the splendor of a crown, you are marching in person against our usurpers: Are you not content? Do not these generous endeavours sufficiently oblige me to you? Would you, my lord, obstinately expect to captivate my whole fate to you? And must I never receive so much as the shadow of one sole benefit, but what comes from you? Ah! suffer me in these misfortunes I'm expos'd to by my destiny, to owe something to the cares of another likewise, and do not complain that another's arm has acquired the glory, where yours could not be.

D. Alphonso. Yes, madam, I ought to give over complaining; you are pleas'd with too much reason to constrain me to it, and we unjustly complain of one misfortune, when a much greater afflicts us. This succour from a rival is a cruel mortification to me; but, alas! this is not the greatest of my misfortunes. The blow, the severe blow, which wounds me to the heart, is to see that rival prefer'd to me. Yes, I but too plainly perceive that his happy pretensions prevail'd above mine; and that opportunity of serving you, that advantage which offer'd of signalizing his prowess, that glorious exploit in saving you was nothing but the pure effect of the good fortune of pleasing you; the secret power of a wondrous star which made the glory fall where your wishes were fix'd. Thus all my endeavours will be nothing but smoke, I am leading an army against your daughty tyrants, but I march with trembling when I

consider that your wishes will not be for me, and that if they are obtain'd, fortune prepares the happiness of more glorious successes for my rival. Ah! madam, must I see myself precipitated from the glorious expectations I flatter'd myself with? And may I not know what crime it is that has deserved the dreadful fall.

Elvira. Don't ask me any thing before you consider what you ought to ask of my sentiments: and as for this coldness of mine which seems to disturb you, I leave it to you, my lord, to answer for me; for, in short, you cannot be ignorant that I know some of the secrets of your soul, and I believe that soul to be too noble and generous to desire me to do what is wrong. Speak; I make you the judge whether it is equitable to suffer myself to be crown'd by an act of infidelity, whether you can, without the utmost injustice, offer me an heart that is already sacrific'd to another; whether you have reason to complain and blame my refusal, which would prevent you from committing a crime. Yes, my lord, it is a crime, for the first flames have such sacred rights over a generous soul, that it should rather chuse to renounce grandeur, and even life itself, than incline to a second love. I have that ardor for you, which esteem may suggest for an high courage, for a magnanimous heart; require no more from me than what I owe you; but maintain the honour of your first choice. In spite of your new flames, consider what tenderness the amiable Agnesa retains for you; who for an ungrateful man, for such you are, my lord, has rejected the greatest offers. How generously she disdain'd the splendour of a diadem; consider what dangers she has defy'd for your sake, and render to her heart what you owe it.

D. Alphonso. Ah! madam, present not her merit to

my eyes; it is but too present to the ungrateful man who abandons her; and if my heart should tell you what it feels for her, I fear it would not seem innocent with respect to you. Yes, that heart dares deplore her, and does not, without difficulty, follow the imperious violence of the love that drags it. No expectation ever flatter'd my desires towards you, but at the same time it extorted sighs for her, and in the midst of it's pleasing thoughts employ'd on you, still my soul cast a mournful look towards my first love, reproach'd itself with the effect of your divine charms, and mix'd remorse with my dearest wishes. I have done more, since I must tell you all, I have endeavour'd to free myself from your empire, to break your chains, and again subject my heart under the innocent yoke of it's first conqueror. But after all my endeavours, my constancy being overcome, is still forc'd to give way to the evil that kills me, and were I to be for ever miserable, I cannot renounce my desires, or bear the terrible idea of seeing you possessed by another; and the God of days, who discovers your charms to me, before he lends his light to that marriage, must lend it to me by death. I know I betray a lovely princess, but after all, madam, is my heart guilty? Does the powerful ascendant of your beauty leave the mind any liberty? Alas! I am much more to be pity'd than she; she, by losing me, loses only a faithless man; and such a sorrow is easy to be comforted; but I have that unparallel'd misfortune to abandon an amiable person, and of enduring likewise all the torments of a rejected love.

Elvira. You have no torments but what you yourself run into, for our heart is always in our own power; it

may indeed sometimes shew a little weakness, but in short reason is the mistress of our passions —

SCENE III.

D. GARCIA, ELVIRA, D. ALPHONSO.

D. GARCIA.

I PERCEIVE, madam, that my coming is somewhat unseasonable, and disturbs your conversation. I must needs say I did not expect to meet with such good company here.

Elvira. This sight indeed surpriz'd me extremely, and I no more expected it than you did.

D. Garcia. Yes, madam, since you say so, I don't believe you were forewarn'd of this visit; but you, Sir, ought at least to have done us the honour to have given us some notice of this happiness, that we might have been prepar'd without surprize, to have perform'd those honours which are due to you.

D. Alphonso. My lord, you are so taken up with heroic cares, that I had been much to blame to have interrupted you; the sublime thoughts of mighty conquerors can't easily stoop to compliments.

D. Garcia. But mighty conquerors, whose heroic cares are so commended, instead of loving secrecy, choose to have witnesses of what they do; their soul bred up to glory from their infancy, makes them, in their undertakings, go bare-fac'd, and being always supported by high sentiments, never descends to mean disguises. Do you not, therefore, wrong your heroic virtues in passing through these places with so much secrecy; are you

not afraid of people's looking upon this action as unworthy of your character?

D. Alphonso. I know not whether any body will condemn my conduct in this secret visit, but this I know, that I never courted obscurity, prince, in such undertakings as requir'd the light. And were I to undertake an interprize upon you, you should have no reason to think I surpriz'd you, for I would take care to tell you of it before-hand. Mean-while let us continue upon the ordinary terms, and postpone our debates to other affairs. Let us suppress the boiling of our too warm blood, and not forget in whose presence we are both speaking.

Elvira to D. Garcia.] Prince, you are in the wrong, and his visit is such, that you —

D. Garcia. Ah! madam, 'tis too much to espouse his quarrel, you ought to dissemble a little better, when you pretend that you did not know of his coming. Your warmth and quickness to defend it is but an ill proof of its having surpriz'd you.

Elvira. I am so little concern'd at your suspicions, that I won't so much as vouchsafe to deny it.

D. Garcia. Go on with your heroic pride, and without hesitating, let your whole heart explain itself. Don't deny any thing, since you have confess'd it; 'tis giving too much credit to dissimulation. Be brief, lay aside scruples; say that you are touch'd to the quick with his passion, that his presence has such delightful —

Elvira. And if I have a mind to love him, can you hinder me? can you pretend to any empire over my heart? and am I to regulate my desires by your direction? know that too much pride has deceiv'd you if you think you have any authority over me, and that my

sentiments arise from too great a soul to submit to fiction: I will not tell you whether the count is belov'd, but be inform'd that he is very much esteem'd, that his high virtue deserves a princess's love better than you; that his ardor and assiduity make all the impression on me a soul is capable of, and that if the over-ruling power of fate puts it out of my power to reward him with my person, 'tis at least in my power to promise him that I will never become the treasure of your flames. And without amusing you any longer with frivolous expectations, this is what I engage myself to, and I will keep my word. I have open'd my heart to you, since you will have it so, and discover'd to you my true sentiments. Are you content? have I sufficiently explain'd myself? Consider whether there remains any thing else for me to do in order to clear up your suspicions. In the mean while, don Silvio, if you persist in your resolutions to please me, I freely tell you that I have need of your assistance; and desire your utmost efforts to punish our tyrants. Value not the transports of a capricious man, shut your ears to his fury, and consider who 'tis desires this of you.

SCENE IV.

D. GARCIA, D. ALPHONSO,

D. GARCIA.

EVERY thing smiles upon you, and your soul proudly triumphs over my confusion. 'Tis a pleasant thing to you to hear the glorious confession of that victory which you obtain over a rival, but it must be an

inexpressible addition to your joy, to have that rival a witness to't, and my stifled pretensions are illustrious trophies in your triumphant eyes. Enjoy this happiness, taste it with deep draughts, but know that you have not yet gain'd your point: I have too much reason to be incens'd, and many things may yet happen. Despair, when it breaks loose, goes a great way, and in him that is abused every thing is pardonable. If the ungrateful woman, in flattery to you, has just now engag'd never to be mine, my indignation will furnish me with means to prevent her ever being yours.

D. Alphonso. This obstruction gives me no disturbance. We shall soon see who is like to be the happy man; each by his valour will be able to defend the glory of his flames, or revenge their misfortune. But as between rivals, the most sedate soul is easily transported beyond the bounds of reason, and as I'm unwilling that such a conversation should exasperate either of us, I desire you would put me in the way of making my retreat out of this place.

D. Garcia. No, no; don't apprehend that you'll be forc'd to violate the order that was just now prescrib'd you. Whatever just fury oppresses me and flatters you, I know when it should break out; this place is open for you; go then and pride yourself in the advantages you have obtain'd. But take this along with you, my head alone can put your conquest into your hands.

D. Alphonso. When things come to that, fortune will soon decide our difference.

ACT IV. SCENE I.

ELVIRA, D. ALVAREZ.

ELVIRA.

NO more, D. Alvarez, return and never hope I'll forget this offence; the wound is incurable, and all endeavours to heal it make it but fester the more. Does he think I'll yield to some false respects? No, he has carry'd things too far, and his vain repentance, which brought you hither, solicits a pardon it shall never obtain.

D. Alvarez. Madam, were you to see his grief, it would touch your soul; never was any offence expiated with deeper remorse. 'Tis well known, the prince is of an age that forces him to follow the first movements of his soul, and in such boiling blood as his, passion leaves no room for reflection. D. Lopez, prejudic'd by a false report, was the occasion of his master's mistake: there was a very confus'd rumour concerning the count's secret arrival, and that you conniv'd at it. The prince gave credit to this report, and so his love being seduc'd by this false alarm, has made this mighty noise. But being now recover'd from his error, he is perfectly sensible of your innocence, and his turning away D. Lopez is a visible effect of that quick sense he has of his offending you.

Elvira. Alas! he too easily believes me innocent; he has not an entire assurance of it yet. Bid him weigh all things well, and not make too much haste, for fear of being deceiv'd.

D. Alvarez. Madam, he knows too well —

Elvira. Good D. Alvarez, let us not continue this discourse any longer; I'm weary of it; it revives in me an unseasonable melancholy, and disturbs other more important affairs. Yes, the surprize of a great misfortune oppresses me, and the report of Agnesa's death has so strong a right in my sorrow, as absolutely excludes all other concerns.

D. Alvarez. This may be false news, madam; but my return carries a cruel piece of news to the prince.

Elvira. The utmost torment he can suffer is short of what he deserves.

SCENE II.

ELVIRA, ELIZA.

ELIZA.

I WAITED, madam, 'till he was gone, to tell you something that will make you breathe again, since you will this moment have a perfect information of what is become of Agnesa. For this purpose a certain person unknown, has sent one of his servants to desire audience of you.

Elvira. 'Tis fit I should see him, Eliza. Let him come quickly.

Eliza. But he desires not to be seen by any besides yourself, and by this messenger requests that his visit may be in private.

Elvira. Well, we will be alone. I will give orders about that, while you introduce him. How strong is my impatience! Ye fates, is it joy or grief that you have sent me?

SCENE III.

D. PEDRO, ELIZA.

ELIZA.

WHERE ———

D. Pedro. Here am I, madam, if you mean me?

Eliza. In what place your master —

D. Pedro. He's hard by; shall I fetch him?

Eliza. Desire him to come; tell him that he's impatiently expected, and shan't be seen by any body. [alone.] There's some mystery in these precautions that I can't penetrate. But here he is already.

SCENE IV.

AGNESEA disguised like a man, ELIZA.

ELIZA.

MY lord, we have prepared — But what do I see? Ah! madam, my eyes —

Agnesa. Don't discover me, Eliza, but let my sad destiny take vent under the fiction of having kill'd myself. This feign'd death is what has deliver'd me from all my tyrants; for under that name I may comprehend my relations. I have thereby avoided the dreadful match, which rather than have consented to, I'd have suffer'd a real death. Under this equipage, and the report of my death, I shall keep my fate a secret, and secure myself from that unjust persecution which may follow me even hither.

Eliza. My surprize might have betray'd you in public; but go into the closet there, and put an end to the sighs of the princess. You will find her there alone: she herself has taken care to put away all witnesses.

SCENE V.

D. ALVAREZ, ELIZA.

ELIZA.

DON'T I see D. Alvarez?

D. Alvarez. The prince sends me to you, to desire of you that you would use your utmost interest in his favour. He cannot live unless by your means, fair Eliza, he obtains one moment's conversation; his soul is transported — but here he is himself.

SCENE VI.

D. GARCIA, D. ALVAREZ, ELIZA.

D. GARCIA.

ALAS! Eliza, pity my misfortunes which sink me to the earth.

Eliza. I should look upon your torments, my lord, with other eyes than the princess does; but heaven has so ordained it, that we all judge differently of things. And since she blames you, and fancies your jealousy to be a deform'd monster, I would be complaisant, and endeavour to conceal from her eyes what might offend them. A lover undoubtedly follows an useful method when he endeavours to accommodate his humour to ours; an

hundred devoirs do less good than this one thing, for we love nothing so much as what resembles ourselves.

D. Garcia. I know it, but, alas! the inhuman destinies oppose themselves to such well advised designs, and in spite of all my endeavours, are continually laying snares for me, which I cannot avoid. Not but that the ungrateful woman did, in the presence of my rival, make a too fatal confession against my interest, and testify'd for him such an excess of tenderness, that 'twas impossible for me ever to forget: but in short, having too hastily believed that she had introduced him into the place, I should be very much dissatisfy'd to leave upon her mind any just reason of complaint against me. Yes, if I am abandon'd; it shall be only owing to the infidelity of herself; for I resolv'd, by excusing myself, and begging her pardon, to leave her ingratitude no manner of pretence.

Eliza. Give a little time to her resentment before you see her, my lord.

D. Garcia. Ah! if thou lovest me let me see her; 'tis a liberty that must be granted me: I cannot stir till her fierce disdain at least —

Eliza. Pray, my lord, defer it a little.

D. Garcia. Don't trifle with me any longer.

Eliza aside.] I find the princess herself must send him away. [To don Garcia.] Stay here, my lord, I'll go and speak to her.

D. Garcia. Tell her that I instantly turn'd away the person whose information caus'd the offence, that don Lopez shall never —

SCENE VII.

D. GARCIA, D. ALVAREZ.

D. GARCIA looking in at the door which Eliza left open.

WHAT do I see, just heavens! may I believe my eyes? Alas! they are but too faithful witnesses. Now the measure of my affliction is full. This fatal blow has compleated my destruction, and when I found myself disturb'd with suspicions, 'twas heaven that with mute threats presaged this horrible disgrace.

D. Alvarez. What have you seen, my lord, to disturb you?

D. Garcia. I have seen what I can hardly believe; the overthrow of all nature would less astonish me than this accident. 'Tis done — Fate — I can't speak —

D. Alvarez. My lord, endeavour to be compos'd.

D. Garcia. I have seen — Vengeance, O heaven!

D. Alvarez. What sudden alarm —

D. Garcia. 'Twill kill me, D. Alvarez, the thing is certain.

D. Alvarez. But, my lord, what can —

D. Garcia. Alas! all is ruin'd, I'm betray'd; I'm assassinated: a man, can I speak it without dying? a man in the arms of my faithless Elvira.

D. Alvarez. The princess, my lord, is virtuous to a degree —

D. Garcia. Oppose me not, don Alvarez, after what I have seen. 'Tis too much to defend her after my eyes have been witness to so black an action.

D. Alvarez. Our passions, my lord, often make us

mistake a deceiving object for a true one, and so think that a soul nourish'd by virtue can —

D. Garcia. Prithee leave me, don Alvarez, a counsellor is offensive upon this occasion; I'll be advis'd by nothing but my passion.

D. Alvarez. There's no arguing with him in this condition. [Aside.]

D. Garcia. O mortal wound! but I'll see who 'tis, and punish with my hand — But see, she's coming, can'st thou contain thyself, my rage?

SCENE VIII.

ELVIRA, D. GARCIA, D. ALVAREZ.

ELVIRA.

WELL, what would you have? and what hopes can your boldness flatter itself with, after such proceedings? Dare you again present yourself before me? and what can you say that will become me to hear?

D. Garcia. I say, that all the wickedness of the damn'd has nothing comparable to your disloyalty; that destiny, the devils, nor heaven in it's wrath ever produced any thing so wicked as you are.

Elvira. How's this? I expected an excuse for an affront, but I find I am deceiv'd.

D. Garcia. Yes, you are deceiv'd. You did not think that by the accident of the door being open I discover'd the traitor in your arms, and saw your shame and my own ruin. Is it the happy lover return'd? or some other rival unknown to me? Strengthen me, O heaven, to bear the racking torture! Now blush, for

you have reason ; the mask of your treachery is now taken off. This is what the disturbances of my soul so frequently intimated ; 'twas not without cause that my flame was alarm'd ; my well-grounded suspicions were seeking what now my eyes have met with. But think not that I will bear this affront unrevenged. I know that we have no power over our desires, and that love will every where grow without dependance ; that there's no entering into an heart by force, and that every soul is free to name it's conqueror ; and therefore I should have no reason to complain of you, if you had express'd your mind sincerely to me at first, and my heart would have laid all the blame upon fate alone ; but to see my flame approv'd by a false and deceitful confession, is such a piece of treachery, such a perfidious action, that it can never be sufficiently punish'd. No, no, after such an outrage, hope for nothing ; I am not myself, I am all rage ; being betray'd on all sides, my love must revenge itself to the purpose ; I must, I must sacrifice every thing to my fury, and end my despair with my life.

Elvira. Since I have heard you with so much patience, I hope I may now take the liberty to speak.

D. Garcia. And pray by what florid discourse, what artful speech —

Elvira. If you have any thing farther to say to me, you may add it, I am ready to hear it ; if not, I hope you will grant me two or three moments peaceable audience.

D. Garcia. Well, then, I attend : ye heavens, what patience is mine !

Elvira. I bridle my indignation, and will, without any passion answer your mad discourse.

D. Garcia. You will perhaps —

Elvira. I have listen'd to you as long as you pleased ; pray render me the like. I admire my destiny, and I believe there never was any thing under heaven so prodigious as 'tis ; nothing more inconceivable for it's novelty, and nothing less supportable with respect to reason. I have a lover who makes it his whole business to persecute me, who amidst all the amorous expressions of his mouth, has no esteem for me in his heart ; nothing that can do justice to the blood I descend from ; nothing that can defend the innocence of my actions against the least shadow of a false appearance. Yes, I see — [Don Garcia shews an impatience to speak.] Do not interrupt me — I see, I say, my unhappiness carry'd to that pitch, that one who says he loves me, and would make me believe that he would defend my reputation against the whole suspecting universe, is he that is the greatest enemy to it. He lets slip no occasion of suspecting me ; he not only suspects me, but, what wounds love, he makes a noise of it. Instead of acting like a lover, who had rather die than offend what he loves, who mildly bemans himself, and seeks with respect to have his doubts satisfy'd ; he proceeds to extremities, and is all rage, invectives, threats. But I will now shut my eyes to every thing that may render him odious to me, and by an act of mere goodness, will make this fresh affront an occasion of his future quiet. Your great rage proceeds from what you accidentally saw ; I should be in the wrong to contradict your sight, and I own you might have some reason to be disturb'd at it.

D. Garcia. And is it not —

Elvira. Hear me a little further, and you will know my resolution. 'Tis necessary that the fates of both of

us should be accomplish'd: you are now upon the brink of a mighty precipice, and you will either miscarry or escape, according to the course you shall now take. If, prince, notwithstanding what you have seen, you act towards me as you ought, and require no other proof but me, to condemn the error of your disturbance; if by a ready compliance of your sentiments, you're willing to believe me innocent upon my sole word, and banishing all your suspicions, blindly believe what I tell you; this submission, this mark of esteem shall cancel, in my breast, all your past offences; I instantly recede from that indignation which I have justly declared against you: and I can hereafter chuse my own lot, without prejudicing what I owe to my birth; my honour, being satisfy'd with this ready obedience, promises to your love both my heart and my hand; but be attentive to what I'm going to say; if this offer I now make you has so little prevalence with you, as not to obtain an entire sacrifice of your jealous suspicions; if what security my heart and birth can afford is not sufficient; and if the powerful umbrages of your spirit force me to convince your senses, and to produce a flagrant testimony of my offended virtue, I am ready to do it, and will satisfy you; but you must depart from me that moment, and for ever relinquish your pretensions to me; and I take the supreme power of heaven to witness, that, whatever we are destin'd to, I'll sooner chuse to die than to be yours. Make your choice of these two proposals; satisfy yourself, and I shall be satisfy'd.

Dr. Garcia. Just heavens! was ever any thing invented with more artifice and disloyalty? Has all that the malice of hell ever study'd any thing so black as this per-

fidy? Could a more cruel method be found out to embarrass a lover? Ah! how well you know to employ my own weakness against me! and to manage for yourself the prodigious strength of that fatal love which your traiterous eyes gave birth to! Because she's surpriz'd, and wants an excuse, she cunningly offers me a pardon. Her dissembled gentleness forges an amusement to divert the effect of my wrath; and by means of the intricate knot of an election, would ward off the blow that threatens a villanous traitor. Yes, madam, your artifices would fain deprive me of that insight which would condemn you; and your soul, pretending an intire innocence, refuses to demonstrate itself fully, but upon such conditions, you think as I will never accept; but you are deceived if you think to surprize me. Yes, yes, I'm resolved to see what you have to defend yourself by; and what prodigy can justify what I have seen, and condemn my fury.

Elvira. Consider that by this choice you cut off all pretensions to the heart of donna Elvira.

D. Garcia. Be it so, I subscribe to it all: in the condition I am in I pretend to nothing farther.

Elvira. You'll repent of the noise you have made.

D. Garcia. No, no, these are vain put-offs, and I ought rather to tell you that some-body else may soon repent on't. The traitor, whoever he be, shall find it hard to escape my rage with his life.

Elvira. This is too much, it cannot be born, my irritated heart can no longer preserve it's foolish good nature. Let us abandon the ungrateful wretch to his caprice; and since he will perish let him. Eliza. [To don Garcia.] You will force me to this discovery, but I will let you see the affront you put upon me.

SCENE IX.

ELVIRA, D. GARCIA, ELIZA.

ELVIRA to Eliza.

DESIRE the beloved person to come forth — Go, you understand me, desire it as from me.

D. Garcia, And can I —

Elvira. Patience, you shall be satisfied.

Eliza aside going out.] This is doubtless some new touch of jealousy.

Elvira. Take care at least that this noble indignation of yours perseveres to the end; and above all, think well for the time to come, at what price you would needs have your suspicions clear'd up.

SCENE X.

ELVIRA, D. GARCIA, AGNESA,
ELIZA, D. ALVAREZ.

ELVIRA to D. Garcia, shewing him Agnesa.

THERE, thanks to heaven, is what gave occasion to your obliging suspicions: look well on that face, and see if you don't find the features of donna Agnesa.

D. Garcia. O heavens!

Elvira. If the rage which disturbs your soul does at the same time hinder your sight; you have other eyes to consult which will leave you no room to doubt. Her death was a necessary piece of cunning, invented to avoid the authority of one who persecuted her, and under this ha-

bit she conceal'd herself, the better to enjoy the fruit of her feign'd death. [To Agnesa.] You will pardon me, madam, if I have been forced to betray your secrets, and act contrary to your expectation. His temerity is so very great that he deprives my actions of all manner of liberty, and my honour, urged by his suspicions, is every moment reduced to a necessity of defending itself. Our embracing each other, which this jealous man accidentally saw, has brought on me an hundred indignities. This was the cause of his rage and my disgrace. [To D. Garcia.] Now, like an absolute tyrant, enjoy the discovery you would needs make. But know that I will never blot from my memory the heinous outrage you have committed. And if ever I forget my oaths, may heaven pour it's severest chastisements upon my head; may a thunderbolt reduce me to ashes when I resolve to admit your love. Come, madam, let us go from hence, and avoid this furious monster; let us fly from his infectious looks and the effects of his rage, and think of nothing else but how to free ourselves from his hands.

Agnesa to D. Garcia.] My lord, the unjust violence of your suspicions has wrong'd even virtue itself.

SCENE XI.

D. GARCIA, D. ALVAREZ,

D. GARCIA.

WHAT a fatal gleam of light dissipates my mistake, and at the same time involves my senses in so profound an horror, that I can see nothing but the dreadful

object of a remorse that kills me ! Ah ! don Alvarez, I see you were in the right ; but hell has breathed it's poison into my soul, and by a fatal stroke of extreme rigour, my greatest enemy is within myself. To what purpose is it to love with the most ardent passion that ever a consumed soul discovered, if by reason of it's transports, which torment me so much, that love continually renders itself hate-worthy ? I must, I must revenge with my just death, the offence I have committed against her divine charms : what counsel can I follow ! Alas ! I have lost the object for which alone I loved life ; if I were able to renounce the hope of enjoying her, I can much more renounce life itself.

D. Alvarez. My lord —

D. Garcia. No, don Alvarez, my death is necessary ; no endeavours shall turn me from it ; but at the same time I must do some signal service to the princess. For this end, I will seek some glorious means of quitting life, so that when I expire for her she may pity me, and say that my too great love was the occasion of my offending her. My hand must by an illustrious attempt give the death due to Moorgat, and boldly prevent the blow that Castile threatens him with : thus, in my death, I shall have the pleasure of snatching so great a glory from my rival's hopes.

D. Alvarez. A piece of service of that consequence, my lord, may well obliterate your offence, but to hazard —

D. Garcia. Let me go then, by the performance of a just duty, to make my despair subservient to this noble attempt.

ACT V. SCENE I.

D. ALVAREZ, ELIZA.

D. ALVAREZ.

NO, never was so strange a resolution seen, despair put him upon a new design, which was to go and sacrifice Moorgat, assuring himself success, and hoping in his death to find a pardon, and prevent the mortification of seeing his rival a partaker of that glory. As he was going out of these gates, unhappy tidings came to him, that that rival had already obtain'd the honour he was going to snatch from him, and had sacrificed the traitor. In recompence for which service it is publicly said that don Alphonso intends to give him his sister in marriage; which is not incredible, since 'twas he that open'd him a way to the throne.

Eliza. Yes, Elvira has heard this news, and has likewise had it confirm'd by old don Louis, who writes her word, that Leon is now waiting for the happy return of her and don Alphonso, and that she is there to receive, by a lucky turn, an husband from the hands of her brother. 'Tis plain enough from these few words of his letter, that don Silvio is the husband she's to have.

D. Alvarez. This blow to the prince's heart —

Eliza. Will undoubtedly strike deep: I cannot help pitying his distress, and yet, if I can make any judgment, he has still a very good interest in her he has offended. I can't find, notwithstanding the success which is boasted of, that the princess discover'd any very great satisfaction at the news of her brother's coming, or with the letter; but —

SCENE

SCENE II.

ELVIRA, AGNESA, ELIZA, D. ALVAREZ.

ELVIRA.

DON Alvarez, let the prince come hither. Give me leave, madam, to speak to him in your presence concerning this accident which surprizes my soul; and do not accuse me of too hasty a change, if I drop all my resentment against him. His unforeseen misfortune has extinguish'd it. He is unhappy enough, without the addition of my hatred. Heaven, who treats him with so much rigour, has but too well executed the oaths I have made. I was obliged by the sentence of offended honour, never to be his; but since I see destiny is too severe to his love, the ill success of what he does in my favour cancels his offence, and restores him my compassion. Yes, such rough blows have severely revenged me, disarm'd my indignation, and now, by a compassionate care, I am seeking to comfort the misfortunes of an unhappy lover; and I believe his flame has well deserved that compassion I would shew.

Agnesa. Madam, they would be in the wrong who should blame the tender sentiments you are inspired with, what he has done for you — he comes and his paleness plainly shews how deeply he is affected with this surprizing stroke.

SCENE III.

D. GARCIA, ELVIRIA, AGNESA, ELIZA.

D. GARCIA.

MADAM, with what front must I advance, when I come to offer you the odious presence —

Elvira. Prince, let us talk no more of my resentment; your destiny has made a change in my heart; and considering the dismal condition it's rigour has thrown you in, my anger is over, and our peace is made. Yes, though you have deserved what heaven has afflicted you with, though your jealous suspicions have sully'd my fame with most incredible indignities, yet I must need confess that I commiserate your misfortune to that degree as to be somewhat displeased with our success. I hate the favours of that service; when my heart must be sacrificed to reward it, and I could wish it were in my power to redeem the moments when destiny extorted from me such oaths against you. But in short, you know that it is the fate of such as we, to be always chain'd down to the public interests, and that heaven has ordain'd that the brother, who is concern'd in the disposal of my hand, is likewise my king. Yield as I do, prince, to this violence, to which those of my birth are subject; and if the uneasinesses of your love be great, let it comfort itself with the share that I have therein, and not make use of the power which your valour gives you in this place against this astonishing stroke; it would undoubtedly be an act unworthy of you to struggle against fate; and when it is to no purpose to oppose one's self to it's rage, a ready submission shews a

greatness of soul. Therefore make no resistance, but open the gates of Astorga to my brother, who is coming; let me render him those rights which he has a pretence to from me, and which I am resolved not to fail in; and perhaps that fatal homage which, against my will, I offer him, may not go so far as you imagine.

D. Garcia. Madam, 'tis too exquisite a goodness in you to endeavour to sweeten the bitter draught, that's prepar'd for me; you may, without any such reluctance, suffer the cruel thunder of your whole duty to fall on me. In the condition I am in, I have nothing to say to you. I have deserv'd the worst of punishments fate can inflict; and I know that I should be in the wrong to murmur at any thing that may befall me. Alas! which way could I authorize the boldness of the least complaint against you? my love has a thousand times been guilty of outrages, and render'd itself odious to you, and when, by a just sacrifice, my arm was preparing to do some service to your family, my stars abandon'd me, and made me taste the bitter grief of being prevented by the arm of a rival. After this, madam, I have nothing to pretend to, I deserve the blow which I expect, and I see it coming, without daring to tempt the favourable assistance of your heart against it. What remains for me in this my utmost infelicity, is to seek a remedy in myself; and by a death propitious to my desires free my unhappy heart from all it's vexations. Yes, don Alphonso will soon be in this place, and my rival already begins to appear. He seems to have flown hither from Leon, to receive the reward of a sacrificed tyrant: Do not be apprehensive in the least that any resistance shall shew the power I have here; there's no human force which I would not defy for your preservation,

if you gave me your consent to do it ; but it is not for me to expect that glorious consent, I who must needs be so odious to you, and I would not, by vain efforts, throw the least obstacle in the way of your just designs. No, madam, I do not in the least constrain your sentiments ; I will leave you in full liberty, I will open the gates of Astorga to that happy conqueror, and patiently undergo the last cruelty of my fate.

SCENE IV.

ELVIRA, AGNESA, ELIZA.

ELVIRA.

MADAM, do not impute the cause of my uneasiness to the despair which his destiny exposes him to. You will be just to me, if you believe that your interest has no small share in the grief that disturbs my heart. I am no less sensible of friendship than of love, and if I complain of any dire disgrace, it is that the dreadful wrath of heaven has from me borrow'd those shafts it lances against you, and has render'd my eyes guilty of a flame which gives unworthy treatment to the goodness of your soul.

Agnesa: This, madam, is an accident which your eyes ought not to quarrel with heaven for. If my weak attractions have exposed me to the ill fortune of having to do with an inconstant, heaven could not better sweeten that misfortune, than by making use of you to rob me of that heart ; I ought not at all to blush at an inconstancy which demonstrates the difference between your attractions and mine. If I sigh for this change it is because I foresee it fatal to your desires ; and in this

grief which my friendship excites in me, I blame my want of merit in your behalf, not being able to retain an heart, the homage whereof causes so great disturbance to your wishes.

Elvira. Rather accuse yourself of that unjust silence which has conceal'd the understanding there was between you two; this secret, if it had been sooner known, might, perhaps, have spared both of us these uneasy troubles, and my just coldness toward him might, in their birth, have stifled the desires of a rover, and sent back —

Agnesa. Madam, he's coming.

Elvira. Without encountering his eyes, you may continue here. Don't go away, madam, but stay, and be a witness to what I shall say to him.

Agnesa. I consent, madam, though I very well know, that were another in my place they would avoid such a conversation.

Elvira. If heaven seconds my wishes I don't think, madam, you'll have any cause to repine at the success of it.

SCENE V.

ALPHONSO, ELVIRA, AGNESA.

ELVIRA.

BEFORE you speak, I earnestly beg, my lord, that you would hear me a moment. Fame has already brought to our ears the news of your wond'rous performances, and I admire, as all do, at the speedy and happy turn which they have given to our destiny. I

know very well that a service of this consequence can never be enough rewarded, and that every thing is due to you for the immortal exploit which replaces my brother on the throne of his ancestors. But though he offers you the homages of his heart, make a generous use of your advantages ; and do not permit this glorious blow to bring me under an imperious yoke, my lord. Do not permit your love, which knows what interest I espouse, obstinately to triumph over a just refusal. Do not suffer my brother to begin his reign by an act of tyranny over his sister : Leon has other rewards enow, which may do more honour to your high valour ; an heart forcibly given you, would be too mean a present for your virtues. Can a man ever be satisfied in himself when, by constraint, he obtains what he loves ? 'Tis a melancholy advantage, and a generous lover refuses to be happy upon such conditions. He will not owe any thing to that violence which the rights of birth exercise over our hearts, and is always too zealous for the object he loves, ever to suffer it to be sacrificed to it as a victim. Not that this heart of mine means to reserve that for another's merit, which it refuses to yours. No, my lord, I'll promise you no person shall ever have power over me, an holy retreat shall to every other pursuit —

D. Alphonso. Madam, I have sufficiently attended to the train of your discourse, and would, by two words, have prevented it all, if your false alarm had prevailed less over you. I know that a common report which is generally believed, ascribes to me the glory of the tyrant's death ; but, in short, the people alone, as we are inform'd, being stirr'd up by don Louis to do their duty, bore away the honour of that heroic act, which I

was reported to be the author of. The cause of which was this; don Louis, the better to carry on his illustrious purpose, caused a useful fiction to be spread abroad, that I and my men had seized the city, and by this news he push'd on the people to hasten the death of the usurper. He knew how to conduct the whole by his prudence and zeal, and has just now inform'd me of it by one of his servants. But at the same time reveals me a secret, which I dare say will astonish you as much as it surpriz'd me. You expect a brother, and Leon it's true master, and now heaven presents him to your eyes. Yes, I am don Alphonso, and being preserved and bred up under the name of the prince of Castile, am an illustrious effect of that sincere friendship, which was between don Louis and the king my father. Don Louis has all the proofs of this secret, and will manifest the truth of it to the whole world; and now my thoughts are taken up with other cares; not that they are cross'd with regard to your love, that my passion quarrels with such a discovery, and that the brother, in my heart, is troublesome to the lover. My flame has receiv'd, without the least murmur, from this secret, the change which nature prescribes to it, and the blood which conjoins us has so intirely detach'd me from the affection for you with which my heart was touch'd, that the sovereign favour it now longs for is the pleasing transports of it's first chain, and the means of rendring, to the adorable Agnesa, that which her excessive goodness has merited. But her uncertain destiny renders mine miserable, and if what is reported be true, in vain does Leon invite me, in vain does a throne wait for me; for a crown would be incapable of making me happy, and has no other charms to me, than as it would let me taste the joy of placing

it on that object that heaven has recall'd me to, and by that means to repair, as far I could, the injury I have done her excellent virtues. 'Tis from you, madam, I have reason to expect to be inform'd of what is become of her. Be pleas'd to instruct me in it, and by your discourse hasten my despair or the happiness of my life.

Elvira. Do not wonder if I delay answering you; for this news, my lord, confounds me. I will not take upon me to say whether Agnesa be dead or alive, but this gentleman here, who is one of her most faithful friends will give you such information as you may depend upon.

[D. Alphonso knowing Agnesa.] Ah! madam, how happy am I in these perplexities to see the gleaming of your celestial beauties? But with what eye can you behold an inconstant, whose crime —

Agnesa. Ah! do not say that a heart which I esteem could be inconstant. I can't bear the thought, and the excuse gives me pain. Nothing could offend me, since you loved this princess, because her high merit is a sufficient excuse for any ardour she might cause. The love you bore her does not make you in any wise guilty with respect to me; but had it been otherwise, know that you would in vain endeavour to make me forget such an affront, and that no force, no repentance should be able to cancel it in my heart.

Elvira. Ah! dear brother, the joy you give me is infinite, I love your choice, and bless the accident which causes you to crown so pure a friendship, and of two noble hearts that I tenderly love —

SCENE THE LAST.

D. GARCIA, ELVIRA, AGNES,

D. ALPHONSO, ELIZA.

D. GARCIA.

MADAM, conceal from my eyes your great contentment, and leave me to die in the belief, that your duty is what commits some force upon you. I know that you are in your own disposal, and my design is not to oppose your desires; you see I am all obedience. But I must confess this gaiety stupifies me, and shakes all my firmness. Such a sight awakens in me such a transport that I fear I shall not be able to command. Though I would punish myself, if it were capable of making me lose that submissive respect which is owing to you. Yes, your commands have obliged me patiently to bear the infelicity of my love. This order is so powerful that I will rather die than disobey you. But still your present joy so shocks me, that I cannot behold it without some emotion; and the wisest soul, upon such occasions, can but ill answer for it's conduct. Suppress it, I beseech you, for a moment, and shew some pity to my misfortune. Do not let my eyes be witness of my rival's felicity. This is the least favour, I think I may pretend to, since my disgrace makes room for a lover. I don't desire it, madam, for a long time. My departure will soon render your wishes satisfied. I am going where my soul, consumed by it's flames, shall no otherwise hear of your marriage than by report, which, though celebrated at a distance from

my presence, will without seeing it be capable of hastening the end of my miserable life.

Agnesa. Give me leave, my lord, to blame your complaint, because the princess has taken pity on your misfortunes. And this very joy which you murmur at arises solely from the good that is prepared for you. She rejoices in your prosperity, and in your rival has found a brother. In short, this is D. Alphonso who has been talk'd so much of; and this great secret was just now reveal'd.

D. Alphonso. My heart, thank heaven, after a long martyrdom, has all that it desires, without taking any thing from you, my lord; and tastes it's happiness so much the more, as it sees itself in a condition to assist your love.

D. Garcia. Alas! this goodness, my lord, in condescending to take part in my wishes, confounds me: heaven has diverted the blow I fear'd, and any other would think himself happy. But the lucky discovery of this favourable secret proves me culpable towards the object I adore; having fallen anew into those traitorous suspicions, which I had been so often in vain warn'd of, I ought to despair of ever being happy. Yes, she has reason to hate me, and I know myself unworthy of pardon, and whatever success fortune may give me, death, death alone, is all my expectation and desert.

Elvira. No, no, prince, your submissions, lamentations, respects, and sorrow move me to compassion. I see an excess of love shining in all your actions, I see the invalidity of my oaths, since the heavens with their influence are the cause of your defects, and therefore some indulgence ought to be allow'd them; and in short,

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jealous or not jealous, my king, without forcing me in the least, may give me to your hands.

D. Garcia. Enable me, heaven, to bear the joy this confession gives me.

D. Alphonso. I desire, my lord, that after all our vain debates this marriage may for ever join our hearts and kingdoms; but time presses and Leon expects us, let us, therefore, go and joyfully satisfy it's zeal, and, by our presence, and several endeavours, give the last blow to the tyrant's party.

The End of the First Volume.